

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 1 – Charlie's First Rifle

Not everyone in the world can afford a fancy rifle. Mitchell's Mauser's probably showed a picture of the Special Museum Grade Rifle* with Bayonet, Scabbard, Belt Hanger, Sling, Leather Ammo Pouch, Cleaning Kit. Nowhere did they explain the asterisk. The pdf file had slightly different information, but the only asterisk there was that shipping to Alaska and Hawaii were \$25 extra, \$45 instead of \$20. The pdf file said that "All Rifles have pristine bores, original finish, and teakwood stocks. The only difference between grades is the beauty of the stock and the accessories. A genuine Mauser 98K, the Model M48 is the Strongest and Best of the original bolt-action Rifles.

Made on German Tooling set up in formerly occupied Serbia. Military-New condition with clean, Bright Bores, and Teakwood stocks, with an American Owner's Manual covering history, operation, and safety. 'Military-New' means it is ready for you; cleaned and tested to assure safety and your satisfaction. Maintained Combat-Ready (and it still is) for over 50 years, now it can be yours. Original Factory matching serial numbers on all rifle parts. Preserved by an accident of history, supply is limited. All original accessories as issued at the time and shown here are included. This Mauser is ideal for collecting, target shooting, hunting, or customizing.

The caliber of the rifles was 8x57JS. The original, military ammunition was full metal jacket 190 gr., lead core. Both modern and surplus ammunition is commonly available. Ammoman had the 8mm Mauser ammo made in Yugoslavia in the 1970's for \$79 out the door or \$120 a case of 900 rounds shipped to your door. Charlie called Mitchell on the phone and they said to come down to Fountain Valley and have a look or take their word for it, they wouldn't cheat anyone. He had to get the address because it wasn't on their website or in their ads and Charlie doubted the whole company fit into a P.O. Box.

If Charlie picked the rifle, it seemed to always be a higher grade. So, Charlie told them to pick a few of their Garrison grade rifles and he'd choose from the lot they selected. It was about what he expected but the barrel and action were pristine as advertised so he paid for the rifle and shipping to a gunsmith up in Lancaster, the Gun Shop. Then, Charlie went to the Gun Shop and filled out all of the paperwork and paid the delivery fee, again, and waited for the waiting period. Strangely enough he got the rifle he had picked and he took it home to show the wife. His \$199 rifle cost him \$199 + \$20 + \$16.42 sales tax plus \$25 for the Gun Shop, a total of \$260.42 and he didn't have any ammo. He couldn't drive to New Jersey for \$41 so he ordered the ammo to be delivered by the Ammoman, Eric.

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Charles T. Tunis was married to Ruth Edna Rogers Tunis and had been for about 8 years. Charlie worked at Edwards AFB for NASA. He was a jet engine mechanic and got to work on some very interesting flying vehicles. Charlie was only 30 and had served at Edwards as a mechanic when he was in the Air Force right out of high school. Ruth was born and raised in Lancaster and had met Charlie during his last year in the

Air Force. Ruth and Charlie had 2 children, Francine 6, and little David, age 3. Francine was in 1st grade at the El Dorado Elementary School and David went to pre-school at Discoveryland Preschool. Ruth wasn't very happy when Charlie showed up with the Mauser rifle. She was even unhappier when UPS delivered the 900 rounds of ammo from New Jersey.

"What's the deal, Charlie feeling wealthy, are we?" Ruth asked sarcastically.

"I saved the money out of my lunch money," Charlie protested. "I've been saving \$2 a day for a year. You only give me \$5 a day to eat on and I earn the money in the first place."

"\$2 a day?" Ruth asked. "Then you must have money left over."

"I do and you can't have it," Charlie insisted. "I have \$140 left over and it's my money."

Charlie paid for his infraction the only way some wives have to make their husband pay. Charlie kept saving money and when he got to \$300, he went looking for a handgun. It was very disappointing; handguns were way out of his price range. Instead, he bought another case of ammo. And, Charlie continued to save up money at \$2 a day. Ruth had given up complaining; it was Charlie's lunch money after all and if he wanted to eat a hot dog and buy a gun instead, it wasn't worth fighting over. Charlie also spent some money on Mauser 5-round 8mm stripper clips at 20 cents each. He bought 200 so he could put a whole case of ammo on strippers.

Charlie shot up the first case of ammo and got to be a reasonable shot with his first rifle. The rifle wasn't much to look at, but it was pretty accurate for a rifle with open sights. Rifles just like that had killed a lot of Allies during WW II. And then, Charlie realized that he needed more ammo and the rifle wasn't what he really wanted. He started saving all of his lunch money and buying the 8mm ammo 2 cases at a time, 1 to shoot and 1 to save.

Therein lay a problem; Charlie got to be a very good shot with his 50-year-old Mauser rifle. It got Charlie to thinking that he needed a better rifle, maybe something with a box magazine. Once in a while Charlie would splurge and buy a gun magazine. He saw an article about Springfield Armory's M1A rifle and fell in love. By this time, he was saving money at the rate of \$25 a week and he could start to make plans. The next time he ordered ammo from Eric, he ordered 1 case of 8mm and 1 case of 7.62x51mm ammo. NASA sent Charlie down to Phoenix to attend a school and Charlie was in hog heaven. You couldn't get 20-round M1A magazines in California but Phoenix had them by the bushel basket. Charlie bought 11 and he had the cart so far ahead of the horse that he was committed to buying a M1A rifle.

Charlie got Ruth to increase his gas allowance because of the rising price of gas. Then he joined a car pool and started socking more money away. He kept intending to mention the car pool to Ruth, but it always slipped his mind. He finally decided that the

Loaded M1A rifle gave him the most bang for his buck. The rifle had the same barrel twist as the National Match rifle and match grade sights. However, the National Match was only a little more expensive so he saved his money and waited. Then he saw a picture of the Super Match rifle with the McMillian Marine Corps camo fiberglass stock and he put off buying the rifle a little longer.

High Desert Storm Sporting Arms in Palmdale offered Charlie the best price at 20% off list and when he finally had enough money, he bought the rifle. That California legal compensator ruined the looks of the rifle and Charlie was looking to buy the National Match Flashhider that the rifle was intended to have. Ruth knew how much money Charlie had tied up in the Mauser and assumed that the new rifle cost more, but not that much more. Charlie wasn't about to tell her otherwise. His passion was growing but he'd scratched the itch pretty good this time. He finally mentioned the car pool and reduced the amount of money he was taking from the family budget for gas by a little. It could only be a little with the price of gas hovering around \$3 a gallon.

Charlie was making good money and they refinanced the house to get a lower interest rate. At 5.75% their house payment went way down but they lost a big tax deduction. Charlie had bought the Mauser when Mitchell first put them on sale and by mid-2005 he had his Super Match rifle and even got a National Match Flashhider on a subsequent trip to Phoenix. Big Five had the Mossberg Persuader® shotgun on sale for \$220 so Charlie added a shotgun to his growing arsenal. The shotgun was the model 500 with a 20" barrel and 8-shot magazine.

When Charlie mentioned his growing gun collection to the fellas in the carpool, one of them suggested he was becoming a survivalist. Charlie denied it, of course, but it did get him to thinking. Using his daughter's computer, Charlie surfed the web to learn about the survivalist movement. Some of what he read was nothing more than common sense and the next time they went to Costco, Charlie bought 2 25# bags of pinto beans, a 50# bag of rice, 100# of bread flour, 25#'s of sugar, 2 of the 6# cans of Crisco and chili seasonings. He bought a jar of yeast at the grocery store. Following instructions he found on the net, Charlie bought some used 6-gallon cans and cleaned them up. He divided his Costco purchases among the cans and added oxygen absorbers. He had to buy another 25# of sugar to fill that pail, but that wasn't a big deal. The donut shop had sold him the pails for \$1 apiece and Charlie had pails left over.

Charlie came to realize that he had a little obsessive and compulsiveness in his personality. That explained how he was able to stick to his goal of saving money to buy a truly expensive rifle. Springfield Armory used to carry a scope that was ballistically matched to the Match 7.62x51mm ammo. But, by the time Charlie had the money to buy the scope they weren't available. Some websites still advertised them, but they were all out of stock. Charlie couldn't even find one on E-Bay. Charlie ended up spending a fortune on a Swarovski Habright PV 4-16x50mm P L riflescope with a TDS-4 reticule. Ruth finally got around to asking Charlie how much the fancy rifle and scope cost. Charlie told the truth, each had cost a couple of years' worth of lunch money. Ruth was thinking \$10 a week but Charlie had saved the whole \$25 a week.

“You mean to tell me you spent \$1,000 on a rifle and another \$1,000 on a scope?” Ruth asked.

“Un,huh,” Charlie replied. “But, I got the shotgun for \$220.” That rifle and scope were getting more expensive by the minute and Charlie forgot to mention the tax and fee for the background check. The rifle cost closer to \$2,500 and the scope wasn’t all that far behind. Charlie’s name wasn’t even Carlos but if he were still alive, he’d probably love Charlie’s rifle.

From that point on, Charlie spent his money on match grade ammo for the Super Match and saved the other half. He wasn’t quite sure what to spend his money on next; he had 2 good rifles and a shotgun. Finally he splurged and spent \$100 on a membership to the range down on Angeles Crest Highway. It wasn’t really a range as much as a place to shoot, and the road was so bad you had to have a 4WD to get into the place.

One Saturday when Charlie went shooting, there were 3 old men there already shooting their rifles. They’d set up a folding table and had sandbags on it to rest their rifles. The names were Clarence, Ron and Gary but Charlie didn’t get the last names, if they were offered. The 2 short geezers each had a Super Match M1A rifle and the tall fellow had a DSA SA-58 FAL rifle. The rifles had some weird kind of flashhiders and the 2 guys with the M1A’s were using 20-round magazines. Kindred spirits and they seemed to be ignoring the California law pretty well. Then, as bold as you please, the guys with the M1A’s opened cases and slipped suppressors on their rifles. Charlie couldn’t hold his peace any longer and he asked about the suppressors.

“I’ll tell you, partner, they’re a little hard to come by,” Ron said. “They have a retail of about \$1700 but they cost us over two grand apiece. On the other hand, they’re not on anybody’s Registry. That’s a pretty fancy scope on that rifle of yours, what is it?”

“It’s a Swarovski, Springfield Armory scopes aren’t available anymore,” Charlie replied.

“We got ours at the right time, right Gar-Bear,” Ron nudged his friend.

“Hey, it’s my turn to shoot,” Clarence insisted.

“How would a fella go about getting one of those suppressors?” Charlie asked.

“First, it would take a lot of money Charlie,” Ron replied. “Then, you’d have to have a brother who lived in a state where suppressors were legal who wasn’t all that worried about being a straw man. My brother lives in New Mexico and Clarence’s brother lives in Alabama. My brother got the suppressors and Clarence’s brother bought him the rifle.”

“That’s illegal,” Charlie smiled.

“So are your flashhider and those 20-round magazines, Charlie,” Ron replied. “Once you break the stupid gun laws, it sort of gets easier.”

“What’s Gary shooting at?” Charlie asked.

“It’s a man-sized target set up at 600-yards,” Ron replied. “Look through the spotting scope and see if you recognize the face he pasted on the target.”

“One of these days…” Gary said and fired another round in to the target’s center mass.

“Isn’t that…” Charlie started to say.

“Yep, that’s the guy,” Ron replied. “Gar-Bear doesn’t care for him very much and when he started drawing maps in the sand, Gary got an autographed picture and made a lot of copies.”

“I don’t have a brother in New Mexico,” Charlie admitted.

“That’s ok, we don’t know you all that well, Charlie,” Ron replied. “I can get you the mount and who knows, maybe someday one of those suppressors might become available.”

“I don’t know the three of you either,” Charlie agreed. “You can wait on the mount until it’s attached to a suppressor. That’s one item I’d never explain to Ruth anyway.”

“You seem to have a pretty good start on a survival armory,” Gary observed.

“I have an 8mm Mauser and a 12 gauge Mossberg shotgun, too,” Charlie replied.

“Lots of ammo?” Clarence asked.

“Three cases of 8mm and about 2,000 rounds of the 7.62×51mm match ammo,” Charlie replied. “It’s \$90 for 100 rounds of the 168 grain match ammo and \$85 for 100 rounds of the soft point hunting ammo. I have about half and half.”

“That’s the ammo that Gary prefers, but I loaded up on surplus,” Ron explained. “What do you shoot in your shotgun?”

“No. 1 buckshot,” Charlie replied.

“Good load.”

“That’s what the guy at the store said,” Charlie replied.

“About 250 rounds would be a good start on shotgun ammo,” Ron suggested. “Try the Federal tactical buck and the tactical slugs with the Hydra-Shok HP slugs. We alternate them in our magazines.”

“Do the 3 of you come here very often?” Charlie asked.

“Every Saturday morning as long as it’s not raining.”

“Maybe I’ll start coming in the mornings instead of the afternoons,” Charlie replied.

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Before Christmas of 2005, Charlie’s Super Match rifle was sporting a new flashhider that really hid the flash. His new friends, who called themselves *The Three Amigos*, were really into the survivalist mentality to varying degrees. Ron and Gary were the most Gung Ho and Clarence was sort of a follower. The guys were old enough to be his father, but their age hadn’t seemed to dampen their spirits. Two of the fellas had bad hearts and the other one had everything else wrong with him. They were always talking about some club they belonged to, but Charlie never got the name of the club.

Charlie hadn’t bought any more guns, but he’d added another 1,000 rounds of the 168-grain match ammo and had a case each of the Federal tactical buckshot and Hydra-Shok HP slugs. Gary had a lot of food put away but it wasn’t in the plastic pails with the oxygen absorbers. Charlie picked up some pails for Gary who said that he didn’t drive and told him where to get the oxygen absorbers. He got the impression that Gary was going to hit Costco and Sam’s Club pretty hard the next time they went shopping.

Gary also said something about Smart and Final Iris Company (SFI) because his wife couldn’t stand pinto beans. Apparently SFI sold several varieties of beans in 10# plastic bags. Gary was a real oddball with 36 of the 57oz cans of Folgers coffee on the shelf. All 3 of the men smoked and to hear them tell it, they each had a 6-month supply of cigarettes. Survivalist didn’t begin to describe the 3 old geezers. Ron had enough guns for WW III and Gary had a ton of food by now. Each man had a Cummins Onan Pro 6000E and a skid tank holding 560-gallons of stabilized gasoline.

Rather than buy any more guns, Charlie started to try and match the 3 old men in his preparations. This was going to involve Ruth so Charlie sat down with her at the kitchen table and explained what he wanted to do. Ruth seemed to have mixed emotions, she was grateful that her husband was thinking about the family but concerned that they might end up with a lot of food on the shelf they’d never eat. Charlie pointed out that he’d already been rotating the flour, sugar, rice, shortening, etc. He was also buying a replacement jar of yeast about halfway to the expiration date.

Charlie asked Ruth to make up a list of the foods they regularly ate that he could store for a long time. He went on to explain that he’d buy the extra food out of his lunch money and that he hadn’t actually eaten lunch in a few years. Ruth started adding the num-

bers up and figured out what Charlie's rifle and scope had really cost. She didn't say anything, but Charlie figured his goose was cooked. Instead, Ruth made up a shopping list and told Charlie to stop spending money on nonsense and buy the food. Every week thereafter, Charlie spent his \$25 at Costco or Sam's Club. It didn't seem like much at first, but after a while they were pretty well stocked up on everything. Ruth agreed to maintain the inventory of food out of her household budget if Charlie would handle the packing and so forth.

With David in grade school they had more money to spend, on other things, like school-books and clothes and everything except guns and ammo. Costco carried the Onan generator at \$1,650. Sears carried a 6.3kw generator made by Generac for \$1,100. The difference in price would go a long way towards paying for a fuel tank and gasoline. Besides, you couldn't beat Sears' warranty and they sold maintenance contracts for nearly everything. They paid for the generator out of some of the household funds and Charlie's lunch money. Every week after he had the generator and the tank installed, Charlie added \$25 worth of gas to the tank, which these days was about 10-gallons.

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Nowhere was it written that the stuff would hit the fan one of these days. It took Charlie a little over a year to fill the fuel tank and then he started filling in around the edges with flashlights, batteries, bulbs and all sorts of survival things. He bought as fancy of a first aid kit as he could use, but nothing more. He started putting away a little money to buy a radiation meter package and extra dosimeters from Shane Connor. And every Saturday morning, unless it was raining, Charlie would meet *The Three Amigos* on the range. Charlie couldn't afford to shoot the match ammo and build his supplies so he bought surplus ammo from High Desert Storm and adjusted the sighting on his rifle. Sometimes he brought the 8mm Mauser or the shotgun so he was proficient in all of their use.

Gary was about the most sarcastic SOB that Charlie had ever met but Ron wasn't far behind him. Clarence was sort of mellow and it took a lot to get him po'd. The only thing that Clarence did when he was angry was talk faster. Gary kept practicing at 600-yards but Clarence never shot more than 300-yards and usually just at 100-yards. It seemed that Ron never brought the same gun to the range twice. He'd bring 2 or 3 and pop off 50 rounds apiece every Saturday. Ron's biggest gun was a Winchester model 70 rifle in the .375 H&H magnum caliber. Ron must have been planning on going bear hunting in Alaska.

Eventually the subject of booze was brought up and the fellas said something to the effect that they'd been there, done that and had the t-shirt. Charlie didn't pry and they didn't say anything else. When Charlie had the chance to buy a used .45 auto, he took it. Then he had to buy a bunch of Hydra-Shok ammo from Eric to supply the handgun. Ron recommended 500 rounds of .45 ACP and 4 spare magazines. Charlie was a rifleman, not a pistolero.

Pistolero, Pistolero, where do you ride

Pistolero, Pistolero, you ride alone tonight

*One of brothers five one day
Vowed to try and make his way
Joined a cattle drive to Mexico
Threw in with some banditos
Yeah, he learned their lingo
Killed a man, they call him Pistolero*

*Five thousand pesos they put on your head
Five thousand pesos to get you alive or dead*

*Ride on, ride hard young vaquero
Fast as you can to her side
Aw, but por mucho dinero
El no bueno por nada have died*

*Pistolero, Pistolero, where do you roam
Pistolero, Pistolero, on your way home*

*Pistolero, Pistolero, where do you ride
Pistolero, Pistolero, you ride alone tonight*

*Every night a candle burns
Waiting there for your return
The candle is out, Pistolero
I see the cabin down below
Pistolero, let her go
Tonight you're mine, pistolero*

*Five thousand pesos they put on your head
Five thousand pesos to get you alive or dead*

*Ah, Pistolero, look around you
Your sun has set in the sky
Ah, Pistolero, I've found you
Kiss Maria, tell Maria goodbye*

*Pistolero, Pistolero, lay your head down
Pistolero, Pistolero, six feet under ground*

Roy Orbison/Bill Dees

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There's something wrong with a man who doesn't like music, according to Ron and Gary. Clarence just smiled and didn't say anything. Clarence always acted like he hadn't seen Ron and Gary in a hundred years every Saturday morning when they got together to shoot. About every 4th Saturday Ron was gone taking care of his father-in-law. And every once in a while, Ron and Linda would go to New Mexico and visit Robert. Apparently Robert and Ron reloaded all of his ammo.

Charlie was 35 in 2008 and Gary was 65, Clarence 66 and Ronald 67. Ruth was 33 and the kids were 11 and 8. Bush had finally pulled the troops out of Iraq in 2007 and the US was reducing its forces in Korea. One Saturday morning, Ron showed up with a new rifle. It was the H&K XM8 weapons system and they weren't supposed to be available to the public. Gary had one of the rifles too but Clarence still had his FAL. All of the barrels for each of the fellas' rifles had the flashhider replaced with the M4-FA Surefire suppressor fast attach mounts and Charlie could only assume that they had the suppressor to go with the barrels. He didn't have to assume for very long because before they fired the guns, they attached the suppressors.

They went through all of the possible configurations for the rifles and decided that most of the time they'd use the 12.5" carbine barrel. While Ron had several .223 rifles, this was the first *Assault Rifle* he'd ever seen either man with. Both men even had the XM320 grenade launcher in the case, but Charlie didn't see any of the 40mm grenades and they never attached the grenade launcher to their rifles. And then, Charlie's palm started to itch. He was almost afraid to ask, but his curiosity got the best of him. Ron looked him in the eye and said, "\$2,500, cash, no questions asked."

Charlie mentioned the rifle to Ruth and told her that it was the perfect weapon for her to have. It weighed next to nothing, had interchangeable barrels and with the suppressor installed didn't make a sound. Tried that on your wife yet? Ruth said she'd think it over. They been married 13 years and Charlie knew that meant yes, but he had to wait until she said so. He didn't mention that simple possession of the rifle broke about ½ dozen laws, but Ruth wasn't simple. The following Saturday morning before Charlie left to go shooting, Ruth handed him the checkbook. Talk about waiting until the last possible moment!

Charlie wrote Ron a check for \$2,500 and Ron said it would be a few weeks because he had to go after the rifle. The price included 7 30-round magazines and 1 100-round drum. Extra drums were available and Ron told Charlie that Gary and he had quite a few and could sell him some whenever he wanted them. Ron was absent the following week and Gary said that Ron went to visit his brother. H&K was located in Sterling, VA and Charlie couldn't see how Ron going to New Mexico had anything to with his getting the XM8 rifle. He didn't dare ask Gary any questions either, that was part of the deal.

The following Saturday, Ron was back and Gary and he each had a new H&K USP Tactical pistol in .45 auto with a suppressor no less. When they were done for the day, Ron went to the back of his SUV and pulled out a box for Charlie. It weighted maybe 15 pounds and was tightly taped shut. Charlie's hands were shaking but he decided to wait

until he was at home in his basement to open the box. It's about 1,000,000 miles from the range back to Lancaster on certain days and this was one of them. Charlie went upstairs and got Ruth so she could see *her* new rifle. That's when Charlie learned that it really was *her* new rifle. She laughed and told him she'd help him save up to buy one of his own. The following Saturday morning Ruth was dressed in slacks instead of a dress and she was ready to go to the range with Charlie so she could shoot her new rifle.

Ruth liked the 12.5" barrel too and she asked Ron about more of the drums. They could spare 4, Ron said, but they were expensive. Ruth whipped out the checkbook and they went home with 4 more of the 100-round drums. Charlie couldn't see how spending \$1,000 on drums was getting him any closer to his new rifle. He was definitely going to have to try a different strategy next time. Ruth didn't even let him shoot her new rifle.

Ronald hadn't gone to New Mexico; he'd gone to Arizona. In Arizona, Ron knew somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody or something like that. The guns weren't just hot – they were smoking! The government and some of the H&K officials were looking all over for a dozen missing complete XM8 weapons systems. They didn't think to look in Arizona. Ruth called Ron during the week and offered to pay for his gas and lodging if he could go wherever he went and get one of the rifles for Charlie. Ron agreed and drug Gary along. The following day they went to someplace in Arizona and were back the day after. They also picked up 4 extra drums for Charlie's rifle and dropped the package off at Charlie and Ruth's when they got home. Ruth zipped of a check for \$3,500. Charlie wasn't the only person who was frugal in the family and buying groceries in bulk had saved Ruth a lot of money over the years.

You might ask yourself why anyone would want a rifle with 4 different barrel configurations. If the question is why, the answer is why not? They can only throw you in jail once and you might get lucky and get concurrent sentences. Ruth told Charlie to get her rifle out of the back of the vehicle when they got to the range. There were 2 identical boxes sitting there, one open and the other still tapped shut. There were also about 1,000 rounds of ammo from the Wal-Mart store in .223 caliber. Charlie knew what was in the box without even looking. He even managed to get the box open without breaking anything. It was time to rock and roll.

The XM8 rifle is sighted in at the factory and you don't have to do anything but load the rifle, move the selector and pull the trigger. Those 30-round magazines sure got empty a lot faster than you could fill them. I sort of envy Charlie, he has a wife that bought him a \$3,500 gun. Charlie was speechless but when he finally found his voice he sort of sounded like Clarence when Clarence was angry.

*Take out the papers and the trash
Or you don't get no spendin' cash
If you don't scrub that kitchen floor
You ain't gonna rock and roll no more
Yakety yak (don't talk back)*

*Just finish cleanin' up your room
Let's see that dust fly with that broom
Get all that garbage out of sight
Or you don't go out Friday night
Yakety yak (don't talk back)*

*You just put on your coat and hat
And walk yourself to the Laundromat
And when you finish doin' that
Bring in the dog and put out the cat
Yakety yak (don't talk back)*

<chiefly sax instrumental>

*Don't you give me no dirty looks
Your father's hip; he knows what cooks
Just tell your hoodlum friend outside
You ain't got time to take a ride
Yakety yak (don't talk back)*

*Yakety yak, yakety yak
Yakety yak, yakety yak
Yakety yak, yakety yak*

FADE

Yakety yak, yakety yak

Recorded By: The Coasters
© Words and Music By: Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller

Yakety yak, that was Charlie when he found his voice.

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 2 – Family Affairs

Ruth rather enjoyed shooting the XM8 rifle and 3 out of 4 Saturday mornings thereafter she'd join Charlie and his friends at the shooting range. They were very careful how they spent their money from that point on, as if they weren't before. Ammunition was very expensive and Ron suggested that Charlie only use boxer-primed ammo and he'd see about getting it reloaded when he went to Robert's. Ron was going for about 1 week at a time every 3 months or so. Ruth and Charlie rationed the ammo carefully but maintained about 2,500-rounds for every rifle and 500-rounds for the shotgun and pistols. That surged whenever Ron returned from New Mexico to about 5,000-rounds of .223 and maybe 3,000-rounds of 7.62x51mm and 8mm. They shot the pistol sparingly because it wasn't very accurate anyway.

Early in 2008, Hillary had tossed her hat in the ring but the country wasn't ready for a lady President, at least not one named Clinton. It was another narrow election but this time in November it went the other way and Obama became President. The Republicans lost seats in both the House and Senate but held on to a slim majority, 5 seats in the House and 1 in the Senate. Maybe too many people had been killed in Iraq, who knows? About the time that Ruth decided she liked shooting, semi-automatic firearms became illegal. Everywhere.

"Charlie don't worry about that damned law," Ron suggested. "I can still get you anything you want."

"I don't suppose you could get me an H&K pistol could you?" Charlie asked.

"With or without?" Ron laughed.

"Just like yours and how about something for Ruth?"

"She might as well have the same thing," Ron suggested. "It's available in .40S&W but then you'd have to stock another size of ammo. It will be tough enough getting .45ACP."

"When I heard the law passed the House and might pass the Senate, I hurried up and ordered 1,000-rounds of .45ACP Hydra-Shok from Ammoman," Charlie explained.

"She got a shipment of .45 surplus in last week," Gary pointed out.

"It's all gone, Gar-Bear," Ron laughed. "How much do you need?"

"Does she have any Hydra-Shok left?" Gary asked.

"Sold it to the same guy, me," Ron laughed louder.

"Can you spare 500 rounds?" Gary asked.

“Yes, how much .223 do you want?”

“I can get that at Wal-Mart.”

“Could, not can, partner, they ran out.”

“What did you do, mortgage your house?” Gary asked.

“AMEX,” Ron replied. “I cornered the market.”

“Jerk!”

“The price is going to go up if you keep talking like that.”

“I’ve always called you a jerk,” Gary protested.

“Yeah but now I have the market cornered on .45 and .223 ammo and you don’t drive a car,” Ron explained. “You’d better get a basket for your wheelchair.”

“I’ll blow my trumpet for you, Gary,” Clarence offered, “I have *charge* down pretty good.”

“Are they always like this?” Ruth asked.

“Only since I’ve known them,” Charlie replied.

“What’s with the *charge* thing?”

“Clarence is a fan of the 10th Calvary. You know, the Buffalo Soldiers.”

“I have a uniform and everything,” Clarence laughed.

“Do you all have uniforms?” Ruth asked.

“Do we look black to you Ruth?” Ron chuckled. “I guess we’re sort of honorary members.”

“There ain’t nothing honorable about you Ron Green,” Clarence said.

“I said honorary, not honorable, Clarence,” Ron pointed out. “Go toot your bugle or something.”

Clarence blew the *charge* bugle call as loud as he could play the trumpet.

“Encore!” Ron demanded.

“That the only one I know,” Clarence said, “Want me to play it again?”

Gary cocked his Ruger Vaquero .45 Colt.

“Never mind,” Clarence said. “That wasn’t funny, Gary.”

“It wasn’t supposed to be funny, but you got the message loud and clear.”

“Let’s go home and beat up the kids,” Ruth suggested.

“My kind of woman,” Ron laughed. “Gary and I will make a trip to Arizona tomorrow and get the H&K’s for you, Charlie. Ruth can handle one of them just fine and she has a sense of humor.”

“So how many rounds of .223 and .45 ammo do you really have, partner?” Gary asked.

“I bought Sandy out and bought out all 3 of the Wal-Mart stores of both calibers,” Ron replied.

“Are we expecting a war or something?” Gary asked.

“What was the last story you wrote about?” Ron asked.

“The usual, Long Valley blew up, the Russian Mafia set off a nuke in Vegas and we had a couple of epidemics,” Gary replied.

“What, no mega earthquake?” Ron asked.

“I read somewhere that it isn’t likely. Anyway, I already did the earthquake story.”

“We’ll talk about it on the way to Arizona tomorrow,” Ron suggested.

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Researchers identified two cellular enzymes Ebola virus must have to reproduce. When those enzymes are blocked, the virus loses most of its infectivity, the scientists found. Ebola virus, like the Marburg virus now alarming Angola, is a *Filoviridae*, a family of viruses that cause severe and frequently fatal hemorrhagic fevers. “Finding medical countermeasures for viral hemorrhagic fevers is a global public health priority because not only do these diseases occur naturally but they also have the potential to be unleashed by bioterrorists,” says NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D. “This new research sheds light on the mechanism Ebola virus uses to enter cells,” notes NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. “These findings raise the possibility of a broad-spectrum antiviral therapy that could be effective against multiple hemorrhagic fever viruses.”

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"I went on the net last night and looked up the mega earthquakes," Gary told Ron.

"What did you find out?"

"We're going to have a 9.0 in Cascadia sometime in the next 500 years."

"Cascadia? Where the hell is Cascadia?"

"British Columbia, Washington and Oregon, generally speaking. There's a Republic of Cascadia. It's sort of like the state of Jefferson. Cascadia sits on its own tectonic plates, called the Cascadia Subduction Zone. The continental shelf offshore is called the Cascadia Shelf. The largest offshore feature on the sea floor is the Cascadia Basin, fed by the Columbia River, which shoots a plume of fresh water 200 miles out to sea. Although less than 10 percent of the continent, Cascadia contributes 20 to 25 percent of the total surface runoff. Twenty of the 40 largest rivers on the continent are fed by Cascadian waters. A bunch of environmentalists are trying to form their own country."

"See, we're going to have a war," Ron said.

"Right, they're going to hug us to death," Gary laughed. "They just a bunch of tree huggers who are po'd at George W. Bush over harvesting timber."

"You haven't answered me about the mega earthquake," Ron pointed out.

"Ron, the largest earthquakes occur at subduction zones, not along transform boundary faults like the San Andreas. While earthquakes that occur on strike-slip faults can cause great damage, they rarely generate earthquakes larger than a magnitude 7, and almost never have earthquakes larger than a magnitude 8. Subduction zones, on the other hand, can produce earthquakes over magnitude 9, such as the 1960 Chile earthquake, which had a magnitude of 9.5. This is because subduction zone earthquakes occur along faults, which are much longer and go deeper into the earth than transform boundary faults. This results in more motion during an earthquake along a subduction zone fault. Washington is located above a subduction zone and therefore has the potential to have much larger earthquakes than the transform boundary in California."

"You're reading that off a piece of paper!"

"I wrote it down so I could say it correctly."

"Now who's the jerk?" Ron asked.

"You are, I got all the ammo I needed last night."

"You didn't come by."

“Right, I went to the gun store on Sierra Highway. Between you and me, the only .223 ammo and .45ACP ammo left in the Antelope Valley is at the Gun Shop.”

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“Ruth, could you go by the Gun Shop today and see if they have any .45ACP or .223?” Charlie asked.

“How much do you want Charlie?”

“Buy him out if you have enough money in the checking account. I have enough set aside to pay for those pistols.”

They weren't even close to buying up all of the ammo in the Antelope Valley. Ron had bought out High Desert Storm and the 3 Wal-Mart stores. Gary had bought out the Santa Fe Gun Gallery, the highest price store in the Valley. Ruth bought out The Gun Shop (also fairly expensive). That still left AV Rick's Pawnshop and Diamond Exchange, Antelope Firearms, J.D.M. Enterprises, Karl's Hardware (2 locations in Rosamond), Palmdale Pawnshop, The Rifle Shop, The Gun Site, Top Gun Firearms and Vineyard Antiques. There were also Hardcast Enterprises, Inc., and Wild West Ammunition Company plus Big Five Sporting Goods (2 locations, Lancaster and Palmdale). Sandy (High Desert Storm) had more ammo in the back room and so did all of the stores they thought they bought out. Nonetheless, they were in good shape for WW III, WW IV and WW V, if they lived that long. Besides, they weren't thinking. Ron had several bolt-action .223 rifles and several different revolvers shot .45ACP ammo. The law only outlawed semi-automatic firearms.

“Nobody needs an Assault Rifle to go deer hunting,” some politician said.

Exactly so, please define an Assault Rifle.

“An assault rifle is semi-automatic or automatic and has a box magazine, a bayonet lug and a pistol grip.”

“So a Garand rifle is an Assault rifle? It is semi-automatic, and has a bayonet lug. According to Wikipedia, in the US, the term has recently been modified as *assault weapon* and applied (for political reasons) to various semi-automatic firearms. Arms manufacturers had for decades advertised the supposed resemblance of their civilian products to military weapons. In the United States, the term *assault weapon* was used in certain groups primarily to describe a collection of semi-automatic firearms that have certain features, such as a magazine larger than ten rounds or a folding stock. It has been used primarily in relation to a specific Gun law, a bill commonly known as the *Assault Weapons Ban*, *Clinton gun ban* or *1994 crime bill*, although weapons capable of automatic fire, including assault rifles, have been under heavy restrictions since the 1930s in the US and were not affected by this now-expired law. Studies by the US Army indicate that most conflicts between soldiers occur at ranges of 100 meters or less. Russian doctrine

asserts that the typical soldier is unable to aim beyond 300 meters, and therefore 300m should be the ultimate aimed range of a rifle for massed fire. These studies influenced the basic design of the assault rifle, which caused ordinary soldiers to become less able to fire accurately at long ranges. However, Russian and Russian-derived doctrines include squad-level snipers, while the US and its derived doctrines maintain a sniper team at battalion level. Senator, what you are saying is nothing but contrived BS!"

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If you looked up the XM8 on Wikipedia, you found the following:

The materials used to build the XM8 are almost entirely composites – with the notable exception of the cold hammer forged steel barrel – causing it to be 20% lighter than the M4 (in similar configurations). Four different models have been proposed: a compact PDW (personal defense weapon) with a 9.5 inch barrel (24 cm), a carbine with a 12.5 inch barrel (32 cm), and sniper and SAW variants with 20 inch barrels (51 cm). In addition, accessories such as optical sights, a grenade launcher, and a bipod are integrated using a new system, which allows for precision attachment (so that, for example, scopes do not have to be readjusted each time they are attached). Like the M4 and M-16, XM8 is chambered for the standard 5.56 NATO round and is normally equipped with a 30-round plastic box magazine. However, this magazine is not compatible with the M4 and M-16's metal magazine. A 100-round dual drum magazine can be used, as well.

One of the XM8's unique features is its modularity. In addition to attachments mentioned above, this modularity allows for quick repairs, barrel length changes, and even caliber changes in the field.

Preliminary tests in desert and arctic conditions have shown XM8 to be an extremely rugged weapon. It is capable of firing 15,000 rounds without cleaning or lubrication and up to 20,000 rounds before barrel replacement. The M16A2 needs to be cleaned at least daily, even if not fired, and has a barrel life of approximately 7,000-8,000 rounds. However, in terms of size and muzzle velocity, the XM8 is virtually identical to the existing M4 and G36 weapons. In fact, the M4 carbine, with a shorter overall length than the XM8, possesses a longer barrel (14.5 inches) than its potential replacement (12.5 inches). Although a shorter barrel generally results in lower muzzle velocity, H&K claims octagonal rifling will offset the effect of the shorter barrel. Ballistic results to confirm this have not been released to the public.

Along with its basic components, the XM8 will complement the XM29, with such features as identical accessory mounts.

The H&K Defense website added: *In addition and in parallel, the new XM320 quick detachable single-shot 40mm grenade launcher with side-opening breech and LSS light-weight 12 gauge shotgun module can be easily added to the XM8 by the user in the field without tools.*

Ronald had obviously screwed the pooch because he didn't have the 12-gauge LSS module. A problem that he only became aware of when Gary pointed out what the H&K website stated. The US XM8 Carbine was being designed at the HK Defense design center in Sterling, Virginia and will be produced and assembled in the United States at the new Heckler & Koch manufacturing plant located in Columbus, Georgia, adjacent to Fort Benning. The unit cost of the XM8 will be less than that of the current M4 Carbine and will guarantee the American war fighter uncompromising performance far exceeding that of current in-service M4 Carbines. Ron got into quite a fight with the SOB in Arizona over his omission of the LSS module. At \$2,500 a copy, the systems were supposed to be complete systems. The dealer in Arizona admitted that the systems omitted the LSS modules because his supplier hadn't included them.

Ron explained that the word *complete* only had a single meaning and the dealer in Arizona now had him in trouble 4 times over a problem that the Arizona dealer was expected to rectify immediately or sooner. That's when Ron found out that life wasn't perfect. It is also when the dealer found out that Ron wasn't perfect. That's when Gary learned that there really was such a thing as a *Mexican Standoff*. He thought those only happened in movies. The dealer agreed to sell the LSS modules to Ronald for just what he paid for them. Ronald cocked his gun. The dealer cocked his gun. The dealer offered to throw in some extra magazines. Ron asked how many. Gary cocked his little 2-barrel .357 Magnum derringer he'd palmed. The dealer offered the shotgun modules for \$200 with 4 extra magazines for each of the pistols and 4 drum magazines for the rifles (1 each). Ron paid the \$200 each for the LSS modules, \$1,100 each for the pistols plus \$500 each for the silencers. They stopped at the first service station so Gar-Bear could clean out his drawers.

Those plastic rifles were turning out to be quite the weapons system. In one small package they had everything from a long barreled pistol to a SAW with a 100-round magazine. They could fit it with an auxiliary shotgun or a grenade launcher. Once Ron and the dealer started acting like human beings instead of 2 enraged bulls, Ron picked up the missing ammo. The dealer charged him \$200 a dozen for the short fat little rounds and Ron bought all that he had, 5-dozen. On the way back to Palmdale, Ron asked Gary if he wanted a dozen or so and Gary said he'd have to check with Sharon to see what they had to spend on more weapons. If they had the cash, he'd pay Ron the \$200 for the LSS and another \$300 for 18 of the M406 HE grenades.

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In far off Washington the new President was weighing his options. The UN was requesting more US assistance in the Sudan. Despite attempts at humanitarian aid and intervention in the civil war, the Sudanese were still going at it hot and heavy. Bush, Sr. had involved the US in Somalia and Clinton was forced to pull the US out. The President was convinced that the US had to do something, but maybe it could be handled differently than the previous failed attempt.

“Is this something we can pull off?” the President asked. “Or is it going to turn into the mess we ended up with in Somalia?”

“Mr. President, the war broadly pitted the Islamist government based in Khartoum against rebels from the mainly Christian and animist south, complicated by issues of oil, ethnicity and ideology,” the Secretary of State explained. “It claimed 2 million lives, mainly from hunger and disease, and forced more than 4 million people from their homes. Often described as the Arab-African border of Sudan, the multi-lingual Nuba people feel neither northern nor southern. However during the years of war and displacement, many of the non-Arab Nubans felt the Arab government favored Arab tribes over them so began to support the rebels. After years of negotiations the SPLA and the government agreed that the Nuba Mountains, one of the most fertile farming areas in Sudan, would remain part of north Sudan with an option to enter into future talks if people were unhappy. Under the peace deal Sudan's south had the right to a referendum to decide whether to secede from the north after 6½ years.”

“That was 2005,” the President pointed out. “If they aren’t going to decide until 2011, why should we get involved now?”

“In the first place, the peace didn’t hold. In the second place it doesn’t appear that there will be a referendum in 2011.”

“But does the US want to get involved in what is essentially a religious war?” the President asked. “I’d rather reduce the size of the military than send them off to fight in Africa.”

“The public will perceive you as weak and indecisive if we don’t intercede,” the Chief of Staff suggested. “Why not kill 2 birds with one stone? The Army claims that our new Objective Force Warriors are equivalent to 20 of the enemy. We think they’re wrong and this is your chance to prove it. We’ll offer the aid to the Sudanese both in terms of food which they’ll be unable or unwilling to distribute and only send in a force equal in size to 5% of the opposing force.”

“And the Army will fall flat on its face so we can withdraw the troops and reduce the size of the Army. I like it, let’s do it,” the President said.

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Rule: Never underestimate the American Soldier.

The Secretary of Defense was instructed to select the Brigades needed to handle the military situation in the Sudan. He was to sit on the Joint Chiefs and send *just enough* soldiers. Thousands of bags of grain were assembled to feed the people by the Department of Agriculture. Health and Human Services was to assemble medical teams to care for the starving and injured. The President made a speech on national TV proclaiming that the US had to help the Sudanese. The following day, he requested au-

thority from Congress to do that very thing. US forces would be limited to only those necessary to carry out the mission thus avoiding a long and painful conflict in the Sudan. It sounded great and Congress bought the whole package. It sort of makes a difference if one knows what went into the planning of that mission. No US President would be so callous as to send our young men and women into harm's way strictly for a political agenda. Since when? It is always about politics, don't kid yourself. President Bush couldn't be seen as weak after the terrorists brought down the WTC and attacked the Pentagon. And he had daddy's little loose end to tie up. And don't forget that Iraq had about 1/4 of the world's supply of oil. It was an intelligence failure of monumental proportions; that's right, the intelligence between peoples' ears. You can't really blame a weakened CIA and a FBI that had forgotten what its mission was. Maybe the US shouldn't try to occupy a country before it's defeated.

The US won the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq. No possible other outcome was acceptable. They stumbled over Saddam in his hidey-hole but never did find Osama bin Laden. The word was that Osama was involved in Somalia. Would he resurface to help the Muslim government of the Sudan to oppose the American force? That's what the President should have been thinking about instead of his political image. Cold, heartless and it couldn't happen the way I described it? You're absolutely right, politicians never act like politicians and reporters never draw maps in the sand to aid the enemy. Ask Peter Arnett, Geraldo Rivera or Dan Rather, they'll tell you. Reporters could no more stop creating the news than lawyers could stop rearranging the facts into the light most favorable to their clients. If the glove doesn't fit, you have to acquit!

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"Hey asshole are you buying the LSS and the grenades or not?"

"Mama says I don't need any grenades, but I checked the bank account in Iowa and we have enough money so bring them over."

"You'll probably get in trouble for spending the money."

"Probably, but it's my money and I'll just blame it on you."

"I'll be right over."

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"You'd probably blame me for the war in Iraq if you thought you thought you could get away with it."

"I would not. That was Bill Clinton's fault. He was the first one to have the intelligence that Osama was a bad boy," Gary laughed. "He just patted him on his turban and sent him on his way."

“Are we going shooting Saturday?”

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world. We won’t be able to test those grenades, however. We can’t afford to attract that kind of attention.”

“So which disaster are we going to prepare for this time?”

“California won’t have a mega earthquake in our part of the state so maybe we need to prepare for Osama getting po’d, over our going into the Sudan, and setting off all of those stolen Russian nukes he has.”

◦

Meanwhile, another outbreak was occurring in the cities of Nzara and Maridi, Sudan. The first case that occurred in Nzara involved a worker who had been exposed to the potential natural reservoir at the local cotton factory. A natural reservoir is a carrier that is immune to its effects. Although many of the creatures – ranging from spiders to insects to rats and bats – found in the factory were tested, none of the tests came back testing positive. Heads up people, if the left one doesn’t get you, the right one will.

Pandemic adj 1: epidemic over a wide geographical area; “a pandemic outbreak of malaria” 2: existing everywhere; “pandemic fear of nuclear war” n: an epidemic that is geographically widespread; occurring throughout a region or even throughout the world

◦

“I got the shotgun module but they cost me \$200,” Ron explained. “I also have 2 dozen 40mm grenades that you can have for my cost of \$200 a dozen.”

“Did you get the pistols?” Charlie asked.

“\$1,100 each plus \$500 each for the silencers.”

“Uh, Ron I only have enough to pay for the pistol and silencers,” Charlie explained.

“Would it be ok if we bought the LSS’s and the grenades later?”

“Take them now and pay me later,” Ron suggested. “Just don’t get in a car wreck or something until you can pay me back. Linda is a little unhappy at the moment. She thinks the guy in Arizona cheated me.”

“Did he?”

“Probably, but when we were eye-to-eye with the guns drawn, it just seemed like I should work something out with him.”

“Guns? I’ll bet Gary crapped his pants,” Charlie laughed.

“Can I go first?” Clarence asked. “I have to go practice my bugle calls.”

Charlie had come a long way since he purchased the Mauser from Mitchell Mauser’s. He had a killer sniper rifle and a really nice auto/semi-auto assault rifle, or two. Ruth and he had 40mm grenade launchers but no grenades and 12-gauge shotgun ammo but lacked the shotgun attachment for the XM8 rifles. Ron didn’t have the heart to make them wait until they had the money. Linda couldn’t get any angrier with him than she already was. Somewhere back when he got into buying guns she finally accepted his hobby. She didn’t approve of anything that wasn’t totally legal so he kept his mouth shut. Sharon was worse than Linda and didn’t approve of Gary having high capacity magazines. She knew he had them but kept her mouth shut. Her reaction to Gary owning an XM8 would have been totally predictable, so Gary decided that she didn’t need to know. He explained away the money by insisting it was ammo purchases.

Sharon had an explosive temper. Gary had learned that once she opened her mouth that he’d better close his and let her run her course. Being right or wrong didn’t have anything to do with Sharon’s temper. Her angry relied upon her perceptions of how things were, not how they really were. It was like the time Sharon bought the VCR/DVD player and Amy hooked it up wrong. Everything worked perfectly until Sharon added additional cable channels. Amy had routed the cable input through the new player and the machine couldn’t get an IP address when Sharon added the additional services. It took the cable guys 30 minutes to locate the problem and Sharon began insisting that Amy didn’t do anything wrong. After she argued with the cable guy for about 10-minutes, Gary suggested that Amy might have done it wrong. Sharon kept insisting and Gary gave up. He didn’t care as long as the cable box worked.

Gary realized that what Sharon didn’t know couldn’t hurt him. That’s when he began to *adjust the truth*. Rule: never lie, but it’s perfectly acceptable to only tell part of the truth. Especially if it kept your head attached to your body instead of being handed to you on a plate. “It’s just a very good .45 pistol, honey. The threads on the barrel are the way the factory ships them. The magazine holds 10-rounds; if you can get 12-rounds in the magazine it may just be a weak spring or something.” Exactly, all 12-round magazines will hold 10-rounds, won’t they? Anything else is purely speculation.

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 3 – One More Little War

Since it was the UN that asked the US to intervene in the Sudan, France, Germany and Russia were silent. Better the US should get their soldiers killed off than France, Germany or Russia. Pakistan didn't send troops to the Sudan like they did to Somalia. If you will recall, things went to hell in Somalia. However, after a confrontation between the Somali National Alliance (SNA) and the UN led to the killing of twenty-five Pakistani peacekeepers, the Security Council made the operation's peace-enforcement mission explicit. Both UN forces and a 1,000-man US rapid-reaction force under US operational control (*Operation Continue Hope*), with the authority of the United Nations, executed it. A clash on 3-4 October 1993 left eighteen US personnel dead and seventy-eight wounded, along with over one thousand Somali casualties. Public outcry in the United States contributed to the decision to withdraw US forces in March 1994. That, coupled with continued internal strife and SNA hostility toward the UN, led to a total UN withdrawal in March 1995. This was executed skillfully, without casualties, in a carefully planned combined US-UN action.

What were they going to call the operation this time? *Operation Pray They Don't Shoot Back*? Supposedly a computer generated the names of Operations. Hogwash, computers are too smart to be politicians and they can only count 0 and 1. As of 20 April 2005, the Ministry of Health in Angola has reported 266 cases of Marburg hemorrhagic fever. Of these cases, 244 were fatal. In Uige Province, which remains the epicenter of the outbreak, 253 cases, of which 233 have been fatal, were reported as of 21 April. $233 \div 253 = 92\%$; $244 \div 266 = 91.7\%$ (big difference)

After the tsunami in December of 2004, scientists were worried about an outbreak of Dengue Fever. There are 50 million Dengue infections a year. It is Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever that kills you just like it is Yellow Hemorrhagic Fever that kills you. There were Dengue infections in the US in 2001. Both illnesses are transmitted by mosquitoes, as is the West Nile virus. There are more bugs running around than there are people to infect. I know – we'll call it *Operation Pray the Bugs Don't Bite*.

The problem with the Future Combat System idea is very simple. Even the bullets (25mm) contain tiny little computer chips. What if Osama decides to send the 13th stolen Russian nuke, that isn't stolen or missing, to the Sudan to show those Americans and Christians a thing or two? (to, too) It's the Christians, not the Muslims, who are starving. A 1kt nuke might not kill too many people but would the bullets and the sights on those M29 rifles still work? (there, their, they're)

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Is the world on the countdown to Armageddon? It sort of depends upon what you believe in. If you believe there will be an Armageddon, then we are most certainly in the countdown and have been since the evening of The Last Supper. It also says in the Book that only the Father knows when the final moment will be. So, why worry about it? Just get your affairs in order, e.g. Kathy on Monday, Marie on Tuesday... By Saturday

morning you're so tired you'll need the weekend off to rest up. If that's the way your affairs are arranged, buy lots of antiperspirant, it's pretty warm down there. You may be too busy shoveling coal or whatever to wear it, but just in case.

And whether (weather) you believe in Armageddon or not, there is a disaster every minute of every hour of every day, somewhere. Buckle that seatbelt; the airbag won't keep you from being thrown from the car, will it? The odds are that staying with the car will save your life. Studies indicate that firearms are used more than 2 million times a year for personal protection, and that the presence of a firearm, without a shot being fired, prevents crime in many instances. Shooting usually can be justified only where crime constitutes an immediate, imminent threat to life, limb or, in some cases, property. It's sort of like a seatbelt; you never know when you're going to need a firearm or an airbag. If you don't believe that, take the airbag and seatbelt out of your car and give your guns to the cops.

Charlie turned in his cheap .45auto and got a \$100 bucks for being a good sheeple. They didn't need it now that he had really good pistols with suppressors. Ron filed a police report of the burglary where they stole all of his guns. Lucky Gary didn't have any guns that were on anybody's books so he did the politically correct thing and backed Ron's story. Ron and Linda were at his and Sharon's house when the burglary occurred, whenever it happened; which, according to Ron was when they were at Gary and Sharon's on Tuesday night. The 4 couples felt much safer now that they outlawed those awful semi-autos. Now, if they'd just disarm the criminals the whole country would be safer.

Naturally, all of the criminals turned in their registered firearms but they didn't have any to turn in because convicted felons can't own firearms and they were all rehabilitated. And another brown cow pumped out 3 more gallons of chocolate milk. And the US loaded up its Brigades and went to save the Sudan.

"Back in 1999, when the Army launched Future Combat Systems, its \$117 billion modernization program, *discussions were dominated by visions of an all-electric, laser-firing fleet of fast-moving tank-like vehicles unburdened by the weight of conventional armor*, notes National Defense Organization.

"Five years later, reality has set in," the magazine sighs. "Industry experts consider it doubtful, however, that the FCS will bring, in the near term, major breakthroughs in power generation, weapon lethality or survivability.

"Fuel-efficient technologies, such as hybrid engines, have improved, but they only will reduce fuel consumption by moderate amounts, experts said. FCS units, like today's brigades, will require a substantial logistics re-supply tail of fuel and ammunition... On the weaponry side, the mainstay of FCS will be cannons and missiles. These weapons will be more sophisticated than current systems, but not a major departure. Non-kinetic technologies, such as lasers and high-powered microwaves, are progressing, but are not expected to be ready for operational use for many years...

“For survivability, it remains unclear what technologies FCS will employ. Conventional passive armor is out of the question if the Army wants to keep the weight of the vehicles at less than 20 tons. We haven’t found magic armor,” the program official said. “The most promising technologies so far are electromagnetic armor and active protection systems, which sense and defeat incoming rockets or missiles by deflecting or intercepting them... [But], according to several sources, there is a strong cultural bias in the US Army against installing active defenses on vehicles, because they are perceived as unsafe...” Is that anything like a force field?

“Nevertheless, the Army has made a major financial commitment to FCS, increasing its overall estimated cost from \$90 billion to about \$115 billion, which will cover the entire 17 systems and a command-and-control network, to be fielded to possibly 43 brigades by 2025.”

In the 1990s the Army dropped from 780,000 to 480,000 active duty end strength. Many in Congress wanted to increase the Army's end strength by as much as 40,000 troops in order to ease the strain of deployments. But the Army's top general, Peter Schoomaker, adamantly opposed adding end strength. Army planners believed the service could gain 10,000 spaces from military to civilian conversions. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld had authorized the Army to temporarily exceed end strength limits by 30,000. The Military Officers Association of America questioned the numbers, stating that the Army already was some 17,000 over end strength, which would bring the actual increase to 13,000.

The Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously approved the fiscal year 2005 Defense Appropriations bill on June 22, 2004, which provided \$605 million to support an Army end strength increase of 20,000 soldiers, leaving the overall Department of Defense end strength of 2,263,900. The provision, passed as an amendment to the fiscal 2005 defense authorization bill, would increase the Army's strength to 502,400. Voting against it were Republicans Gordon Smith of Oregon, Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, Larry Craig of Idaho and Craig Thomas of Wyoming. Not voting were Senators John Kerry, D-Mass., Robert Bennett, R-Utah and James Inhofe, R-Okla. The House version of the bill, approved in May 2004, would have added 30,000 Soldiers and 9,000 Marines over three years. Under the fiscal 2005 Defense Appropriations Act, which President Bush signed into law 05 August 2004, Air Force Reserve Command's end-strength ceiling was raised to 76,100 reservists in the Selected Reserve in 2005.

The Army's Average Strength during FY2004 was 210,252 higher than authorized end strength, reflecting Guard and Reserve mobilizations authorized in the supplemental. In October 2004 the FY2005 Defense Authorization Act increased Army end strength by 20,000 and Marine Corps end strength by 3,000 for FY2005, with additional increases authorized in future years. The Army recognized the challenges the continuing deployments had created. It was one of the driving forces behind the Army growing by close to 30,000 Soldiers over two years.

The authorization that the Army had to raise the end strength to 512,400 through fiscal 2009 would allow the service to continue its transformation plan. That plan was to build to 43 active brigade combat teams and 44 reserve component brigade combat teams – 34 National Guard, 10 Army Reserve – and the support units needed to maintain them. The requirement was to be able to deploy and sustain 20 brigade combat teams. To do that on a sustainable model, the Army believed that it must be able to go to one deployment in a three-year term for active forces and a deployment in a five- or six-year term for your reserve forces.

The 512,400 active duty figure was based on continued access to National Guard and Army Reserve troops. Key to that was having units trained sufficiently prior to deployment. If that wasn't true and the National Guard and reserves were not available under those assumptions, then the Army had to grow the active force further.

The *third wave* is a plan by the Department of the Army to outsource 214,000 civilian and military jobs to the private sector. For the first time, almost all non-combat positions are included in the outsourcing plans. The genesis of the third wave was a 4 Oct 2002 memo from Secretary White to the Non-Core Competencies Working Group (NCCWP).

On January 28, 2004, Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, briefed the House Armed Services Committee on plans to restructure the Army's current organization, which retained the 10 division headquarters as battle command headquarters. The Army would increase the number of brigades under those divisions from three maneuver brigades to four. That alone would take the service from 30 brigades under the division structure to 40 (plus two armored cavalry regiments and the 173rd Airborne Brigade) by FY 2007.

The Army normally deployed forces in 2,500 to 4,200-soldier Brigade Combat Teams. These consist of a ground-maneuver brigade (most divisions have three) augmented by other units, such as artillery battalions, which are controlled by the division commander.

The new *brigade based* structure would replace the current arrangement, designed for the Cold War when the Army was prepared to fight giant set-piece battles on European soil, where the support roles were organized at the division level. It would improve the deployment ratio so that there could be two brigades at home for every one deployed overseas.

The restructuring would leave a division with three types of brigades: heavy, with armor; light, with motorized infantry, and airborne. This new Brigade Units of Action was different from the Units of Action the Army was forming to achieve the Future Combat Systems [FCS]. The FCS first unit equipped (FUE) – one battalion equivalent – in 2008 and an initial operating capability of one brigade Unit of Action (UoA) in 2010.

Growing the fourth included taking much of the division-level support elements – such as engineers, military intelligence, supply and maintenance units – and making them organic to the brigade structure. The service would move some enabling resources –

such as air defense, signal and intelligence – to the brigade level. Each brigade unit of action will have one fewer company-size element and less artillerymen. However, it would have more military policemen, better command and control assets to talk to each other over long distances, and more certified troops to call in close air support. The brigade unit of action would have enough command and control capability to operate independently. This pushed support roles down to the brigade level. It took the support brigades – those that do artillery, supply and maintenance, for the most part – and sprinkled their personnel across the Brigade.

How many Brigades did they send to the Sudan? *Enough according to White House sources*, was what Geraldo, who was trying to get in good with the White House, reported. Are there any conspiracy theorists out there? You can never seem to find one when you need one. They seem to wait until the troops are home and start to raise their questions. Why do they wait, do you suppose? Gary and Ron always wondered about that. Gary and Ron were conspiracy theorists, too and they didn't wait to propose their conspiracy theories, but nobody listened to them. Except, of course for Clarence and now Charlie, but two (too, to) more families don't get the world's attention. They didn't have 2- or 3-dozen listeners like Geraldo had. Ron and Gary were just a couple of crusty old farts out in Palmdale, NOT PALM SPRINGS, California who most people in the world didn't even know existed, including Geraldo. But, Gary kept practicing his marksmanship at 600-yards, just in case he ever got lucky.

Since Charlie worked for the government, he had to be careful not to make too many waves and he was forced to only take his Mauser to the range because he'd turned in all of his semi-auto weapons, except for the M1A, which somebody had stolen. And of course he couldn't file an insurance claim because his homeowners insurance didn't cover firearms, especially illegal weapons like semi-automatic rifles. Come to think of it neither did Ron's, which must explain why he didn't file an insurance claim either. Fraud is a very serious crime and who knows, they might search your house. Those guns and guns safes were heavy to have to move to Gary and Sharon's and Gary was disabled and couldn't help commit a crime. This time. He might have if Ron had kept his promise and brought him a wheelchair ramp, but Ron forgot or something. And Sharon claimed a 4'x4' piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood wouldn't fit in her car. Plus the doctor told Gary not to use the wheelchair in the house, so it made a pretty fancy office chair.

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The President must have said, "Osama bin Who?" when the Sudanese exploded a Russian nuke that wasn't stolen and wasn't Russian and made all of our Future Combat Systems in the immediate area quit working. The M29 had a problem firing because it used a computer to aim its projectiles and the 25mm *bullets* contained little computer chips. Keeping your *bullets* in a Faraday cage may have been smart, but it weighed too much. The really strange thing was that the AK-47's used by the Sudanese still worked. It's ok to be outnumbered 20 to 1 when you have all the electronics working, but when you down to the Sergeant's M9 and some of the XM8's, you're really in trouble.

But wait, I said that the terrorists had 13 stolen Russian nukes that weren't missing and weren't Russian, didn't I? Had is right and they all worked perfectly. By now you must all know that the blast radius on a non-missing, non-stolen, non-Russian 1kt nuke is about 360 meters, right? All that meant was that the terrorists couldn't bomb the nuclear electrical generating plants. It didn't mean that they couldn't make the bombs go boom. Did you ever watch *Force 10 from Navarone*? Edward Fox played SSgt Dusty Miller who blew up a whole dam with some TNT taken from German mines. I wonder what a 1kt nuke would do if you could smuggle it inside of Hoover Dam? That's just assuming they really existed.

What would happen to the electrical generating station at Niagara Falls or some of those other electrical generating stations if somebody blew them up? The US doesn't get much electrical power from hydroelectric dams so the terrorists couldn't afford to blow up more than Hoover Dam and the electrical station at Niagara Falls. They went after the other large generating stations in the US instead. There are 2 good ways to bring America to its knees. One is to destroy the electricity and the other is to interfere with the natural gas supply. Lots of those electrical plants run on natural gas, you know. The problem with that idea is that as soon as they repair the pipe, the plants are up and running. On the other hand, if you destroy the plant, it will take years to replace. Sears sells a 6.3kw Generac generator for \$1,100 and they take payments.

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The only reason Gary knew that the power was out was because the TV quit blaring from the Living Room. He checked a light switch and the lights were out. He checked the refrigerator in the kitchen because it was on a separate circuit and it was gone too. That's why he had a 6kw generator and he fired it up, plugged in the extra heavy-duty extension cord (10-gauge) and pulled the main fuse block from the electrical panel. He plugged in the extension cord and the lights were back on. Patti was fooling around with Chris's truck trying to get the 5kw generator fired up so she had power.

According to CNN, the outage was widespread and had been caused by nuclear detonations at 12 electrical facilities. The 1kt nukes weren't missing any longer. Since the terrorists hadn't hit any nuclear generating plants, Gary wasn't too worried about radiation. Palmdale gets its water from wells and from the aqueduct. The aqueduct going by Palmdale comes down from the delta, not from the Colorado River. LA lost its power and a fair share of its water resource. LA cut Palmdale off from the aqueduct because they needed the water. Now, everyone was suffering. The Mayor of Palmdale immediately ordered that people stop watering their lawns. It didn't matter because without electricity, the sprinklers didn't work anyway. The phone still worked so Gary called Ronald.

"Did you lose your power too?" Gary asked, seemingly innocently.

"Whole damned country is out, don't you watch TV?"

“CNN says they took out Hoover Dam and 11 other power facilities,” Gary replied. “Did you get your generator going?”

“We should have bought bigger generators, I had to turn the air conditioning off.”

“It’s only supposed to get to 103 today, it shouldn’t be too bad,” Gary laughed. “Turn on your fans and get some air moving.”

“Is it time to lock and load?” Ron asked.

“I can’t see why any terrorists would come here, Ron,” Gary replied.

“It’s supposed to be 90 in LA today.”

“That shouldn’t be any problem, the government banned semi-automatic weapons,” Gary laughed. “I guess we’d better just in case. I don’t see the riot spreading to Palmdale, do you?”

“Probably not. Are you guys ok on food or do you need to go to the store?”

“We’re ok. I’m good for 60 days on my prescriptions and I have plenty of smokes,” Gary replied.

“I’ll call Clarence and talk to you later, partner. Ciao,” Ron signed off.

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“Did you talk to Clarence?”

“He was at a meeting so I told Lucy,” Ron replied.

“I called Ruth and told her what was happening. She already had their generator going.”

“It’s a good thing we didn’t get any of the M29’s,” Ron said.

“Why?”

“The Sudanese set off a nuke and wiped out a lot of the computers and circuits in those rifles,” Ron explained. “It isn’t too bad, they still have machine guns and the XM8’s.”

“The M312 machinegun has an electrical trigger partner, I hope that isn’t all they have for machineguns,” Gary replied.

“Are we getting any radiation from any of those Russian nukes they set off?”

“I haven’t turned on a survey meter, I have no idea,” Gary answered. “Did you remember to turn off your sprinklers?”

“Yeah. Lyn and I are going to see her Daddy.”

“Oh, is he sick again?”

“Nah, we’re going to talk him out of enough money to buy one of the residential standby systems so we can have one installed and use our air conditioner.”

“Tell him I need one too,” Gary laughed.

“I was thinking more like 4, Clarence and Charlie need them too.”

“How are you going to manage that? I thought you told me he was pretty tight fisted.”

“He’s also totally senile now, Gar-Bear. We’ll tell him the money is for charity.”

“Where in hell are you going to find 4 residential standby generators in the middle of a national blackout?”

“Costco sells them and I spoke to the store manager. All he had available was the 15kw units made by Onan. I bought them on the spot and we just have to get the money to pay for them, they’re delivering and installing them tomorrow.”

“Load up on smokes while you were at Costco?” Gary asked.

“I bought 20 cartons, 10 for Clarence and 10 for me.”

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Later in the day, Gary flagged down the Arrowhead delivery guy.

“What are the chances of getting set up with water?” Gary asked.

“At a time like this, pretty slim,” the deliveryman said.

“I used to be your best residential customer, don’t you remember?”

“How could I forget? I could probably reactivate your account, but I could only let you have 7 bottles of water. If I recall correctly, you used to keep 30 5-gallon bottles on hand.”

“That’s right. I can get you 3 more customers, if you want them,” Gary explained.

“Where are they?”

“Two more in Palmdale and one in Lancaster.”

“I suppose they’ll all want the boxes so they can wire them together like you did, huh? LA cut our water allocation so you’ll have to agree to buy the Mountain Spring water,” the deliveryman explained.

“Ok, but the cheaper drinking water tastes better,” Gary laughed. “Set me up and I’ll write down the addresses of the other guys.”

Gary had never realized how much water they drank until they started buying bottled water back in the early 1990’s. They usually went through 7 or 8 5-gallon bottles every 2 weeks. The water in Palmdale had turned bad as soon as they had to rely solely on the wells. The water was so hard that you could almost walk on it. His reverse osmosis filter had clogged almost immediately. It wasn’t a particularly efficient unit and used a lot of water back when it was working. Sharon and he had talked about the water situation and had decided to go back to bottled water. He was lucky, a week later, Arrowhead stopped accepting new customers.

Except for the power outage, the county didn’t seem to be in any major trouble. Well, there were the riots, but south central was a long way from Palmdale. Costco had their installer put in the 15kw units and Linda paid for them. It must be nice to have a Daddy worth \$10 million and getting richer every year. The price of gas had risen sharply and was hovering just short of \$4 a gallon for 87 octane. They needed electricity to run the pumps for the pipelines and there was almost no electricity available. People without standby generators were in a lot of trouble. You couldn’t find stick matches in any of the grocery stores because people were buying them to light their stoves. But, except for the constant drone of those new residential generators, life was pretty much normal at the 4 families homes.

The President had deemed the NASA test programs at Edwards to be non-essential and Charlie was temporarily out of work until the power was restored. Edwards imported all of its electricity from Hoover Dam. The Air Force brought in generators but they didn’t have enough and only essential services at Edwards were running. Since Edwards was a Flight Test Center there weren’t many essential services. People were hurting all over the Antelope Valley. Charlie and Ruth less than many because they had electricity and water, thanks to Ron and Gary. Eighty-five percent of the people in the Antelope Valley, who worked, worked in LA and without power and having limited water; most businesses had been forced to shut down.

The long and short of it was that the terrorists had created an economic disaster of major proportions. Except for Hoover Dam and the Niagara Falls generating facility, they’d taken out the 10 largest generating plants in the US. We were talking thousands of megawatts of power and the system couldn’t fill the gap. FEMA had implemented their emergency plan almost immediately but that shut down all of the businesses except those that produced food products or critical services. The problem was there was no

money for people to spend on food. And while key services, like banks for example, were up and running, they were reluctant to loan money just to buy food. It was about to get a whole lot worse, the President decided to withdraw the troops from the Sudan and bring them home. Osama bin Laden was on TV again proclaiming victory against the Great Satan. The truly sad part was that Osama was about ½ right.

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“Are we going to the range on Saturday?” Ron asked.

“I think we’d better, Ronald,” Gary replied. “We need to sight in the rifles for the match ammo so if we need to use them they’ll be ready to go.”

“I never bought any match ammo,” Ron protested.

“I’ll swap you some for some of the surplus stuff,” Gary offered. “The .223 I have is all surplus from Lake City overruns but most of my 7.62x51mm ammo is Black Hills.”

“Geraldo is going to be in LA,” Ron pointed out.

“Screw him, he isn’t worth the price of the bullet and if I killed him I wouldn’t have him to hate.”

“CNN says they shut down the stock markets for the duration,” Ron added.

“That’s good, they can’t fall if they’re not open,” Gary replied.

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Towards the end of the deployment, several American soldiers developed Ebola-Sudan. The CDC immediately diagnosed the illness and the soldiers were all quarantined. However, as with anything, Ebola-Sudan sometimes takes 4 weeks to manifest the symptoms. Only one sick American came home, a married soldier with 8 kids ranging from age 6 to age 17. By the time the soldier showed the symptoms, the children in all of the schools his kids attended were infected. People began to flee the area in and around Ft. Bragg, taking their sick children with them. It was a good thing the President had shut down the domestic airlines due to the power emergency. The virus began to take a footing and CNN, FOX, NBC, CBS and ABC news were carrying the CDC reports scaring the public to death.

When the CDC first announced the Ebola outbreak, the President immediately stopped international flights, too. He was a day late and a few dollars short. If you drive non-stop from the east coast to the west coast, you can make it in a couple of days, assuming you can find gas and had the money to pay for it. The guy at the self-service gas station may have a rifle and be weaning latex gloves and an N-95 respirator, but he’ll take your money through the little tray. He uses your money to make change for other people.

But, you probably just used your ATM card until you ran out of cash in the bank, right? Some states have a real advantage because they have border stations to monitor agricultural products. But by the time California bureaucracy closed the border entry points entirely it was too late. Agricultural inspections on all private and commercial vehicles are conducted at sixteen-border inspection stations located on major highways throughout the State (six at the Oregon border, five at the Nevada border, and five at the Arizona/Mexico border). This was a hard list to come by, write it down.

REDWOOD HIGHWAY – US Highway 199, NE of Crescent City – O'Brien, OR

SMITH RIVER – Highway 101 North – Smith River, CA

MEYERS – US Highway 50 – South Lake Tahoe, CA

WINTERHAVEN – West Interstate 8 – Winterhaven, CA

LONG VALLEY – US Highway 395 – Chilcoot, CA

ALTURAS – South Highway 395, 4 miles north of Alturas – Alturas, CA

TULELAKE – State Highway 139-North – Canby, CA

BENTON – US Highway 6 – Benton, CA

TOPAZ – US Highway 395 - Topaz, CA

TRUCKEE – Interstate 80 – Truckee, CA

BLYTHE – East Interstate 10 – Blythe, CA

NEEDLES – Interstate 40 – Needles, CA

VIDAL – State Highway 62 – Vidal, CA

YERMO – Interstate 15 – Yermo, CA

DORRIS – US Highway 97 – Dorris, CA

HORNBROOK – North Interstate 5 – Hornbrook, CA

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 4 – Don't Touch Me/Don't Breathe on Me

All of a sudden, the breakthrough research on controlling the Ebola Virus that I mentioned became very important. It was the number one national priority. The Three Amigos and Charlie weren't too worried; they had N-95 masks and lots of everything. The year 2010 was turning out to be a very, very bad year. All they needed now was for an asteroid to pop out from behind the sun and head for earth. Hopefully, I scared the crap out of you in my previous story where I explained all about epidemics and pandemics. If you didn't read it, you may not understand what was going to happen next. (*Title 18*)

They all called their doctors and begged them to call in prescriptions for a year's supply of their medicines to be filled all at once. Maybe the doctors could see the handwriting on the wall, was that Arabic or Farsi (?), and they filled the prescriptions. They were good for now and could barricade themselves in their homes because a Presidential Order had dismissed all of the public schools. Plus, all of the businesses that supplied critical food and services were shut down except for the hospitals. This wasn't the best time for any sort of illness unless you really wanted to die. Except, the moment the Ebola broke out, the CDC had imposed strict quarantine procedures on all of the hospitals. The hospitals already knew they had a hemorrhagic fever, they just didn't know which one. It was Ebola-Sudan. I wonder if Obama will be elected President in 2012?

Gary could remember talking to Dr. J about the Marburg Virus back in 2005 and he sort of wondered if Dr. J was shaking in his boots like he did when Gary brought the subject up. Ebola-Sudan had a death rate of 50%-55% on average. The 1976 outbreak killed 23 of 34 infected people – 67%.

Although there is no specific treatment for patients with Ebola, there have been entire books written about how to prevent it from spreading from the patient to health care workers or other patients. The first step in prevention is to make advanced preparations for Ebola and other viral hemorrhagic fevers (VHFs). A VHF Coordinator should be selected to oversee preparations for VHF activities, and be responsible for the following:

- Serving as the focal point for information and leadership when a VHF case is suspected.
- Informing all health facility staff about VHFs and the risks associated with them.
- Organizing training in VHF Isolation Precautions for staff that will work with VHF patients or infectious body fluids.
- Making sure that teams are trained to prepare and transport bodies for burial (CDC 115-116).
- The next step is maintaining a minimum standard of cleanliness in the hospital. This includes washing hands and sterilizing needles (CDC 9-18). Also, the medical staff must be informed about the different types of VHFs, including Ebola, and their symptoms.

Symptoms that are common to many VHFs are severe weakness and fatigue, and a fever for more than 72 hours and less than three weeks. The patient also may have unexplained bleeding from the mucous membranes, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal tract. The patient may also be going into shock (has a systolic blood pressure of less than 90mm Hg or tachycardia (a rapid weak pulse). Finally, that patient may have had contact with someone in the last three weeks that had an unexplained illness with fever or bleeding or who died with an unexplained severe illness with a fever (CDC 23).

- Next, the infected patient must be isolated from other, uninfected patients and from health care workers who are not directly involved in care of the infected patient. The patient should be given intravenous support, as he or she is probably dehydrated from losing fluids through vomiting and diarrhea. Finally, if (when) the patient expires, the body should be properly disposed of, preferably through cremation, so that the dead body will not spread disease to other people (CDC 26). Just don't send the bodies to the Tri-States crematorium down in Georgia, they're probably closed. They didn't close the one in Lake Elsinore because the guy had sold the business. He cremated the bodies, after removing parts and selling them to medical researchers.

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"You shouldn't be making jokes about asteroids," Clarence suggested. "If you say it, it has a way of happening."

"Hogwash. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen and there isn't one flippin' thing we can do about it. Besides, according to that program the Discovery Channel runs from time-to-time, the number of asteroid hits had dropped over the past 4 billion years."

"Do you have any Clorox bleach?" Clarence asked. "Lucy ran out and we don't have the entire house disinfected."

"I bought it by the case at Costco. Come on over and get a case. How's that new generator running?"

"I sure hope they don't shut off the natural gas," Clarence replied.

"Ron was talking about putting in propane tanks," Gary explained. "He used to work for AmeriGas designing commercial installations. According to him, we can get some pretty big propane tanks installed and filled."

"How much propane would it take?" Clarence asked.

"The 15kw unit burns about 1.6gph at a 50% load. That's 38.4-gallons a day. A 10,000-gallon propane tank filled with 9,000-gallons would last for about 234 days. It might be longer because at night we wouldn't be using much electricity. At a 25% load, it burns 1.2-gallons per hour or 28.8-gallons per day. Let me do the math. 8 hours at 1.2-gallons

per hour and 16-hours at 1.6 gallons per hour would equal 35.2 gallons per day and 9,000-gallons would last about 256 days.”

“But if we didn’t run the air conditioning and didn’t use the lights very much, how long would it last?” Clarence asked.

“Maybe as much as 312½ days,” Gary replied.

“But can we get large propane tanks?” Clarence asked.

“Linda’s Daddy has lots of money and is totally senile. He paid for the generators and I suspect that Linda is going to talk him into buying the tanks for some charity,” Gary explained. “Linda’s sister gets whatever Linda gets so she’s not complaining. Their father is giving most of the money to charity when he dies anyway.”

“I thought that Ron and Linda were planning on moving to New Mexico,” Clarence continued.

“Only when her father dies and she gets her inheritance. He’s hanging on for dear life. I think that he’s about 90 now,” Gary replied. “He may end up outliving both Linda and her sister.”

“How big of a tank can we put in?” Clarence asked.

“It probably depends on 2 things, Clarence,” Gary answered. “How much money Ron and Linda get and how big your lot is. I looked up some tanks for a story one time and found 4 tanks listed. The 30,000-gallon tank was available in either a 108” diameter 66’ feet long or a 131” diameter that was 47’ long. The 45,000-, 60,000- and 90,000-gallon tanks were all 131” in diameter and ranged in length from 69’ to 90’ to 134’, respectively. I could put in a 45,000-gallon tank if I ran it on the diagonal, but there’s no way I could afford 40,500-gallons of propane. I’d probably put in a 47’ tank and put as much propane in it as we could afford. They have to be set back from your house, so we’d have to bend some rules just to put in a 30,000-gallon tank. The last I checked, the spot price of propane was about \$1.60 per gallon.”

“Why would we have to buy our own tanks?” Clarence asked. “And what does the spot price translate into when you’re talking about buy large quantities of propane?”

“The propane company isn’t going to tie up its inventory in a tank that doesn’t show usage, Clarence. If we want really large tanks, Ron is going to need to buy them. Then, it will be up to him to persuade the people he used to work for to supply us with the propane,” Gary answered. “I can’t translate the price into a commercial price or retail price because I have no idea. I used to get 4.5-gallons of propane for about \$6.75 when the spot price was around 80 cents a gallon. But, that was retail and a small purchase.”

Translation: The 5-gallon price was about double the spot price. Therefore in 2010, it would cost about \$3 a gallon to buy propane at 5-gallons a time. But, that was retail and maybe Ron could buy it at commercial or wholesale prices from the company he used to work for. Any way you sliced the pie; you could figure over \$2 a gallon and probably more. And you couldn't figure on running the generator at much below a 25% load. Still, 27,000-gallons of propane at 28.8-gallons per day would last you about 937.5 days or nearly 31 months. And, you would only start using propane if they turned off the natural gas. Come to think of it, you'd better get propane jets for your furnace, hot water heater, dryer and kitchen stove while you're at it. Of course if you're using 100% propane for everything, it sure won't last you 31 months, will it?

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Ronald McDonald pulled every string he knew of and they finally got propane tanks and could buy propane in 3,000-gallon lots. That would get them the wholesale price of \$2.25 per gallon or about \$6,750 a truckload. You have to understand how everything worked. *The Three Amigos* went way back to the mid-1990's and Charlie had been around long enough to be considered a 4th amigo. Besides, Linda's Daddy was really getting senile and he was beginning to believe about anything. The money wasn't coming out of Ron and Linda's pocket and the sister didn't care as long as she got included as an amigo. Everything, except the guns, was being done in groups of 4. Linda's sister was a dyed in the wool sheeple.

So let's talk about the Ebola epidemic. The President shut down the whole dang country. That sort of stopped the spread of the Ebola, sort of because it was already in all 50 states and in Puerto Rico. It was also spreading all over the civilized world because he hadn't stopped the international flights in time. Maybe the planet Earth would have been better off if a rock did come from out behind the sun. But, it didn't happen, despite Clarence's worse fears. Only the states and areas that depended on the Colorado River for water and electricity were affected by the loss of Hoover Dam. Those states mainly included Arizona, California and Nevada. By comparison to California, Arizona and Nevada were sparsely populated, but about 10% of the US population lived in California.

At the risk of repeating myself, areas of highest population concentrations were hardest hit by the epidemic. The United States of America isn't Switzerland where they have a really good Civil Defense program. Even Russia has a better Civil Defense program than the US. California was especially hard hit because of other diseases associated with drinking bad water. Water-borne diseases include cholera, typhoid, shigella, polio, meningitis, and hepatitis A and E. An estimated 3 billion people lack a sanitary toilet, for example. Over 1.2 billion people are at risk because they lack access to safe freshwater. Those numbers increased a little when California lost a portion of its water supply.

To sanitize drinking water, use 5ppm of Clorox bleach. That's 8 drops per gallon, 1 teaspoon per 10-gallons, 2 fluid ounces per 100-gallons or 13 fluid ounces per 1,000-gallons. That was if you were using Ultra Clorox Germicidal Bleach to treat potable water. Clorox is effective against: Adenovirus Type 2, Hepatitis A, HIV 1, Respiratory syn-

cytial virus, Herpes Simplex virus 2, Rubella virus, Feline parvovirus, Rotavirus, Cytomegalovirus, Influenza A2, Varicella zoster virus, Rhinovirus types 17 & 37, and Canine parvovirus. You can add Staph, Athlete's Foot fungus, Kelbsiella pneumonia, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, pool algae, Strep, Salmonella, E. Coli, Legionella, Shigella dysenteriae, Mildew, Plant parasitic nematodes, Plant disease causing fungi, Karnal bunt, asparagus root rot, Xanthomonas vesicatoria, Corynebacterium michiganense and Phytophthora lateralis, depending upon concentrations. Understand, that's according to my reading of one source. Don't use the powdered Clorox, it will kill you.

Bleach, stored under normal conditions has a shelf life of about six months. It does not work well on spore forms of bacteria or mycobacterium. Iodophores kill a wide range of disease-causing organisms including bacteria, fungi, many viruses, and most microorganisms and work equally well in warm or cold water and have a long shelf life. 70% ethyl alcohol with a 20-minute contact time proves to be a powerful broad-spectrum germicide for many pathogens. New strains of pseudomonas may prove resistant to iodophors. Lysol kills fungi, tuberculosis, certain viruses, staphylococcus and pseudomonas bacteria. Wavicide-I and Wavicide-06 are totally effective against ALL pathogens.

In the final analysis, it really boiled down to whom really had access to the most money. The President couldn't save the country because he couldn't keep everything running even if the US had the most modern Army in the whole darned world. Those little bugs didn't give the scientists' time to perfect the enzymes. That didn't make a hell of a lot of sense unless it was some sort of CONSPIRACY; they'd made the discovery back in 2004. Clarence was talking a mile a minute, he must have been pretty angry. Ron was waving his arms and Gary was chain-smoking. Charlie watched the 3 old farts in total amazement; he'd never seen them when they really got going.

"So what's the problem?" Ron asked. "We bought everyone a 30,000-gallon tank and had the fill billed to her Dad. Out of the 3 of you there's only one with any brains and Charlie isn't talking."

"Watch it partner, I'm wearing my Laredoan Rig," Gary said in a menacing tone.

"Chit, I'd have you dead and buried before you even got the loop off the hammer," Ron laughed.

"Who's on first?" Clarence asked.

"It's spelled H-U, don't you ever read my stories?"

"Not if I can avoid it and I've been successful so far," Clarence replied. "You use all the words I don't know."

"Damn, I can't even remember which story I put that in," Gary laughed.

“Probably the one where you killed us all,” Ron said.

“You’re right, Ronald, I put it in *Big John*.” Gary replied. “I think that’s the only one that I killed us all.”

“If you’re going to kill everyone, would you mind leaving me out of your fiction?” Charlie asked.

“Don’t worry about it Charlie, he’s killed me a couple of times,” Ron suggested.

“Anybody know what’s going on around the country?” Charlie asked.

“Just the usual stuff, Charlie, the bad guys are killing the good guys and we’ll have to ride to their rescue.” Gary replied. “Play the charge, Clarence.”

(Use your imagination.)

“Encore, Clarence,” Ron clapped his hands.

“Hell no, Gary’s wearing his guns,” Clarence replied.

“Does everyone have enough latex gloves and masks?” Gary asked.

“I don’t need any,” Charlie answered. “We only get out of the house to come down here and go to the range. The kids are starting to get bored; does anyone have any DVD’s or VHS movies?”

Ron almost choked and Gary snickered.

“What’s so funny?”

“I have 600 movies and Ron has over 1,100,” Gary explained. “Between us, we have more movies than Blockbuster.”

“They’re both packrats, Charlie,” Clarence explained. “Ron buys every new movie that comes out. Gary only likes movies with certain actors. Sharon worked for Disney and has every Disney kid movie they ever sold.”

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Recent studies show smokers are 4.7 times more likely than the population at large to suffer from major depression. Dozens of other surveys reveal cigarette users are more liable to struggle with anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, alcoholism and drug use. Smokers consistently demonstrate higher-than-average levels of neuroticism (Codependency) and high-risk behaviors, and show poorer impulse control than nonsmokers.

“People who smoke today are, for the most part, people who are addicted in unique ways,” said David Gilbert, a professor at Southern Illinois University who examines how nicotine affects the brain.

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“What’s with the barricade at the front of the housing tract?” Charlie asked.

“We stop visitors and pass out masks and gloves,” Gary explained. “We don’t let anyone in if they appear to be sick.”

“The City of Lancaster was around raising hell over my propane tank,” Charlie continued.

“Don’t worry about it Charlie, we pulled all of the proper permits,” Ron suggested. “Anyway, your lot is big enough that you have more than double the setback required in the Lancaster Municipal Code.”

“You’ve been a real lifesaver Ron. I don’t know what Ruth and I would have done without you. To think that it all started over a Mitchell Mauser,” Charlie related.

“Hang on to that Mauser Charlie,” Gary suggested. That and your shotgun are legal. Everything else you have squirreled away is totally illegal these days. I personally believe that the pandemic is over, but this is only the beginning. With so many people dying, you aren’t going to see much food in grocery stores and with all of the businesses shut down, people are going to be forced to steal what there is or starve. There aren’t many people with any money to spend, so they’ll end up taking what they need at the point of a gun. It wouldn’t matter if it was one of the Calderas blowing its top, an abrupt climate change or that mega-tsunami that La Palma’s Cumbre Vieja will cause when it falls into the Atlantic Ocean. Life as we knew it is gone. It was just a matter of time, you know. I heard on the radio that the death toll is about 55%, give or take. That’s about 165 million people in the US alone.”

“The days of international wars are probably over for a while, Charlie,” Ron continued. “In most of the countries you’re going to see the residents fighting over whatever resources are available. Very few countries have ever had a disaster of these proportions. The largest loss of life in the last decade was the earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean around Christmas of 2004. Gar-Bear told me that the Spanish Flu Pandemic back at the end of WWI killed a half million in the US and 40 million worldwide. The Black Death killed maybe $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world population. If the death rate from the Ebola-Sudan holds, you’re going to see 3-4 billion people dead before it’s all over. It’s a good bet that in the US a lot of the survivors will be people who don’t live in big cities, like the farmers. Nonetheless, people are going to survive in the cities and they’re going to be hungry.”

“Everyone will eventually figure out who has food and who doesn’t,” Clarence added. “A man with a starving family won’t hesitate to take food to feed them if that’s his only option.”

“If they attack farms and farmers, they’ll be cutting off their nose to spite their face,” Charlie suggested.

“Right, Charlie, and they’ll do it without thinking about the long-term consequences if they’re desperate enough,” Gary granted. “We do have a plan B, you know.”

“What’s plan B?” Charlie asked.

“We’ll pack our stuff and head to the Victor Mine,” Ron answered. “Gary found the place on the Internet. It’s an abandoned mine in eastern California between Blythe and Needles that was once set up as a Civil Defense shelter. It’s called the Underground City. Anything of value has long since been removed, but it’s the real estate that we’re more interested in.”

“How would we get there?” Charlie asked. “We sure can’t move those propane tanks, they’re too heavy.”

“The tanks weigh 51,400 pounds each and 27,000-gallons of propane weighs 114,750 pounds,” Ron replied. “The weights per gallon are: Propane 4.25#; Gasoline 6.3#; Diesel 6.6#; and, Water 8.3#. We each have our portable generators and 300-gallons of gas, less any we’ve used. The prudent thing to do would be to move those gasoline tanks onto a truck while they’re nearly empty and then refill them.”

“Ron, 1,200 gallons of gas would weigh about 4 tons,” Gary pointed out. “Even if we had 1½ ton pickups, it would be all we could do to haul the tank, generator and 300 gallons of gas on one pickup.”

“Too many vehicles, Gar-Bear,” Ron laughed. “I had in mind to get a U-Haul moving truck. The biggest one is the 26’ truck, but the 24’ truck has the largest weight capacity at 6,500 pounds. Since we’d steal the truck anyway, what’s the difference if we overload it a little? I’d just have to be a lot more careful driving it.”

“The U-Haul place on Sierra Highway was abandoned when I came by earlier,” Charlie said.

“Were any of the gas stations abandoned?” Ron asked.

“Yeah, Ron, most of them,” Charlie replied. “They can’t pump gas without electricity.”

“Now’s as good a time as any,” Ron suggested, “Lock and load.”

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They took 2 of the 26' moving trucks because that was what was available. From the U-Haul business they went to Charlie's and loaded up his nearly empty tank and his portable generator. Charlie helped and they loaded the tanks one-by-one, two to each truck along with the portable generators. While the 4 amigos were no doubt getting ahead of themselves, this was as good a time as any to get prepared to bugout. They solved the problem with the gas pump hoses being too short by attaching a piece of garden hose and using an adjustable hose clamp. The tanks were at the front of the trailers, wedged in place by 2x4's. A couple gallons of Rust-Oleum paint, some sand paper and primer changed the trucks from U-Haul trucks to People's Motorsports Racing transport trucks. Chris painted all of his own cars, you know.

Speaking getting prepared, it is only 85 statute miles from Gary's house to the Marine Corps Logistic Base located in Barstow, CA. The Marine Corps Logistics Bases (MCLB) at Albany, Georgia, and Barstow, California, comprise a two-base supply and depot maintenance complex that provides worldwide expeditionary logistics support to the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) and other forces and agencies. The repair facilities operate as multi-commodity maintenance centers. The maintenance center (MC) is an integral part of the Marine Corps Logistics Base, and works closely with the other organizations in carrying out the mission of the base, which is to provide logistics support to Marine Forces that will maintain continuous readiness and sustainment necessary to meet operational requirements.

Between MCLB Barstow and the other MCLB (MCLB Albany, GA), only Barstow has a climate that allows outdoor storage of all types of supplies for nearly indefinite periods of time. The absence of a requirement to construct sheltered storage facilities at MCLB Barstow translates into significant cost savings over MCLB Albany. MCLB Barstow is not subject to flooding as has occurred at MCLB Albany, GA. When, in late spring 1994, the Chattahoochee River flooded its banks following a massive rainfall it was rendered a federal disaster site. Precisely because of the ideal climactic conditions at MCLB Barstow, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), (which in 1992 took over much of the material storage function at MCLB Barstow from the Marine Corps), is considering further enhancing and expanding the materiel storage function of the Barstow facility. Considered it and did it would be more accurate in 2010.

Hoorah! If you want to equip an army, go to Barstow, California. They have some of everything. They also have 2,000 civilian and 500 military employees. Nobody needed any supplies to fight any wars these days and the MCLB was locked up tight and abandoned. Hmm, I wonder if Barstow is where they store those 3,000,000-rounds of .50 caliber BMG ammo for the M85 machinegun? Does anybody need anything, we are on our way to Barstow?

"What's an M-18?" Charlie asked.

"That's a Claymore, load them up," Ron instructed.

“Do we want M136 AT-4’s or LAW rockets?” Clarence asked.

“Yep,” Ron replied. “Has anybody seen a MK-19 or a Ma Deuce?”

“If you find the Ma Deuces, be sure you get the right ammo,” Gary cautioned. “It took me 2 hours to figure out what the difference was between Ma Deuce ammo and M312 ammo.”

“What’s the difference?” Clarence asked.

“They use different links and aren’t interchangeable,” Gary replied. “It was supposed to be an improvement.”

“Do we want any of the M29’s?” Charlie asked.

“Not if we can find 40mm grenades for the M320’s,” Ron replied. “Better isn’t always better. Nobody is trying to be an Imperial Storm-trooper.”

“Do we want M-16’s?” Charlie asked.

“The mines or the rifles?”

“The mines.”

“Yep.”

Use the correct ammunition: never use high-velocity 40-mm ammunition designated for other 40-mm weapons such as the Mk 19. High-velocity rounds are longer than those used in the M203 and may cause this weapon to explode.

Ammunition packaging varies according to the type of ammunition:

(1) HE, HEDP, and TP. Each box of HE, HEDP, and TP ammunition contains 1 can with 6 bandoleers of 12 rounds each, for a total of 72 rounds.

(2) Smoke and Cluster Ammunition. Each wire-bound box of smoke and cluster ammunition contains 2 cans with 22 rounds each, for a total of 44 rounds.

(3) CS Ammunition. Each box of CS ammunition contains 2 cans with 4 bandoleers of 6 rounds each, for a total of 48 rounds.

(4) Buckshot. Each box of buckshot ammunition contains 12 bandoleers of 6 rounds each, for a total of 72 rounds.

Global Security refers to the M62 hand grenade. That’s a typo, it’s an M26 and it’s an obsolete grenade. However, the grenade has been copied and is in use by NATO forc-

es. That's why guys who only know about hand grenades from what they read thought the M62 was MIA. The M61 was the version with the jungle clip used in 'Nam. FM3-22-31 covers 40mm grenades for the M203 and FM 3-23-30 covers US hand grenades. It also has pictures of everyone's hand grenades. The M2 pineapple grenade is also obsolete, but many countries still use copies. The Marine Corps probably sent all of the obsolete M26 hand grenades to Hawthorne, NV for disposal. I'll bet they have a real backlog in Hawthorne. FM3-23-27 covers the Mk-19 and it's a pdf file you can save on your computer. It's only 22Mb.

Although the Mk 19 was a recent entry into the Army's inventory, development began in 1963. The first version was a hand-cranked, multiple grenade launcher called the Mk 18. In 1966 the need for more firepower inspired the development of a self-powered 40-mm machine gun called the Mk 19, MOD 0. This model was neither reliable nor safe enough for use as a military weapon system. Product improvements begun in 1971 resulted in the 1972 MOD 1, of which only six were produced. The MOD 1 performed effectively in Navy riverine patrol craft and broader applications for the Mk 19 were found. In 1973 the Navy developed the MOD 2, which featured improved reliability, safety, and maintainability. In 1976 a complete redesign resulted in the Mk 19, MOD 3, which the Army adopted in 1983.

FM20-32 covers mine and countermine operations. *The Three Amigos* knew exactly what they needed. Gary had written about it many times before and kept a list of nasty things to look for in Barstow. To effectively protect Moon Shadows, they needed 2 Mk-19's and as many Ma Deuces as they could find. Ron, Clarence and Charlie would stay in their homes until they needed group protection. At that point in time, they would load up all they had to transport and head to Moon Shadows. Therein lay a minor problem and Charlie borrowed another U-Haul truck and got Chris to make it a delivery vehicle of one kind or another. Everyone kept most of their things loaded aboard the trucks. Ron and Clarence were forced to hook up vents to the gasoline tanks to keep the trucks from exploding and everything inside smelling.

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 5 – Save the Valley

Clarence was the first to show up; Ron followed him shortly and Charlie showed up an hour later. Moon Shadows was fully mobilized and they got ready to defend their property. The event that had triggered the response was a stream of cars on highway 14, the Antelope Valley Freeway. Matt, Chris and Patti's oldest son, was positioned at the Pearblossom Highway off ramp and when he saw the cars, he beat feet to Clarence's. Clarence called Ron and Charlie and finished loading their things. For whatever reason the phones were still working. What made that really amazing was that Pacific Bell (SBC) served Palmdale and Verizon served Lancaster.

When the cars got off the freeway, they headed west into the more affluent neighborhoods. Palmdale was divided into 2 distinct communities, the affluent west side and the blue-collar eastside. Moon Shadows was on the east side and at one time, it was red-neck heaven. Over time, the character of the neighborhood changed. It was more like a Barrio in 2010. Ron spoke a little Spanish and Gary refused to learn. Gary got along with most of his neighbors. The only exception was the people in the house between theirs and the People's. There were 4-5 families living in a 3-bedroom 2-story house. The name of the resident's wasn't the same as the name on the title. It had all gotten very interesting having the people living between them because they had a pack of mean dogs that occasionally got out and bit people.

Amy got bitten and called Animal Control. The neighbors brought their dogs inside and there was nothing the Animal Control Department could do. That had gone on for several months and eventually the dogs got out and attacked Patti. Patti knew all about the illegal daycare center they were running in the home and she raised hell with Animal control. On April 26, 2005, Animal Control showed up and a lady with the City of Palmdale was along in a separate vehicle. Patti showed the gal from the city the dogs in the backyard. When the Animal Control person looked from Gary and Sharon's yard, they'd taken the dogs inside.

Every time the lady from the city showed up, the residents got a fine of \$75. She said she was coming back every day until she got the matter under control. The front door of the folk's house looked like a bulletin board with all of the notices the Animal Control person and the lady from the city taped on the front door. If these folks were running true to form, they'd have the dogs gone before the following morning. The lady from the city had seen the dogs, however and she was coming back every day until the Animal Control person picked up the 5 dogs. And, every time she came, it was a \$75 fine. Since they had more than 3 dogs, they had to: 1) get a kennel license; and, 2) replace the wooden fence with a 6' high concrete block wall, which was 140' at \$35-\$40 a lineal foot. The fence had to have a padlocked gate and anytime they left the gate unlocked, it was another fine. Gar-Bear had his Rambo III knife and .32 auto on top of his computer for a long time afterward.

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Nobody gave a crap whether the people at 4552 were protected or not, but there were the other 38 homes to consider. It only takes one bad family in a neighborhood to really screw things up. I wonder what their reaction was when everyone in the Moon Shadows tract starting walking around with XM8 rifles and short barreled shotguns. We were never going to know, they were barricaded in their home.

One Mk-19 was on Stardust Place just a little south of Northstar Drive. The second was on Moonraker Road at the intersection of Moonraker and Moondance Drive. A pair of Ma Deuces at each location accompanied them. A 3rd Ma Deuce was in Dick's backyard and a 4th in Darlene's. Dick lived on the south end of Stardust Place and Darlene lived on Northstar Drive. The 5th and 6th Ma Deuces were in the back yards of the home at the north ends of Stardust Place and Moondance Drive. I can assure you they had all the proper ammo. The Mk-19's were loaded with M430 HEDP rounds.

The high-explosive, dual-purpose (HEDP) M430 cartridge is the standard round for the Mk 19 (Department of Defense Identification Code [DODIC] B542). They are linked with M16A2 links. The HEDP round, the top-curved portion of the projectile, is olive drab with a yellow ogive and yellow markings. It is packed in M548 (48 rounds) or PA120 (32 rounds) ammunition containers. The HEDP, an impact-type round, can penetrate 2 inches of steel armor at 0-degree obliquity and inflict personnel casualties out to 15 meters from impact. It arms within 18 to 30 meters of the gun muzzle and has a point-initiating, base-detonating (PIBD) fuze.

And they waited. And, waited. Finally after several hours on high alert, they stood down the housing tract but maintained people on the crew served weapons. Crew served means it takes at least 2 people to *man* the weapon. I don't know why, they only have one trigger. Military Term (notably USMC). A weapon which is too heavy for one man to carry, and is as such served by usually 2-4 men. An example of this would be a heavy Machinegun or rocket launcher, such as the FGM-148 Javelin. Oh, that makes sense. Now, if they'd just replaced the ammo and the trigger on the M312, the heavy machinegun would take a smaller crew. Don't look for it to happen, *they* was dead.

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Presumably the bad guys were making out pretty well in the affluent neighborhoods; they didn't show up for a long while. Matt only saw a few of the cars before he bugged out to warn Clarence and the people at Moon Shadows. It is extremely poor planning to keep a facility on full alert because they get tired, complacent and lose their alertness. They were just about to leave the housing tract when they got company. Ron and Gary had long since given their families up as dead. Damon was in Mason City, Iowa and Derek was in Flippin, AR. Ron's daughter Paula was in Austin, MN and his daughter Jennifer was in Ft. Smith, AR. Several phone calls had been made and the kids said they were coming. After that, they'd lost contact.

Mark and Paula had wait for a month before leaving Austin. They stopped in Mason City and picked up Damon and his girlfriend. Derek had waited about the same amount of

time and had taken US 412 to I-540 and into Ft. Smith where he got together with Jennifer and Bobbie Joe. The cars of people darn near ran into each other in Tucumcari, NM when one group came in from the east on I-40 and the other group joined I-40 from US 54. Derek has passed Mark and Paula's car and Damon got Mark to blow the horn until Derek stopped. Bobbie Joe and Jennifer recognized Mark and Paula's car and had fallen in behind. When they finally showed up, they all showed up. The bad guys could wait another day. They fixed Derek up with an XM8 and M320 plus one of those M9's that he sort of liked. They did the same for Mary because she was a former soldier and told Damon he could have a baseball bat. Ron took care of supplying Mark and Bobbie Joe with weapons.

Clarence's boys were already at Moon Shadows and had been there since their Dad and Mom had shown up. So was Clarence's sister, but Linda's sister didn't want any part of some bunch of rednecks. Linda called her and told her that Jennifer and Paula were there and she finally got off her liberal behind and came to Palmdale. She couldn't stay; however, somebody had to keep an eye on Daddy. Let me give you an example of being senile. The same lady came to his house on 5 consecutive Mondays. Each of those days, he wrote her a check for \$1,500. It was for a legitimate charity, but how legitimate is a charity that pulls a stunt like that? The ironic thing was that her father had stubbed all five checks. The housekeeper got suspicious and called the sister the next time the lady showed up and the sister said to boot her. (It really happened!)

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ON THE VIETNAM MEMORIAL

David Lee Meyer
SSGT - E6 - Army - Selective Service
Americal (Non-Brigade – Company E, 51st Infantry – Long Range Patrol)
21 year old Single, Caucasian, Male
Born on Jul 14, 1949
From CHARLES CITY, IOWA
His tour of duty began on Oct 07, 1970
Casualty was on Jan 11, 1971
in QUANG NGAI, SOUTH VIETNAM
Hostile, died of wounds
HELICOPTER - NONCREW
AIR LOSS, CRASH ON LAND
Body was recovered
Religion
LUTHERAN & MISSOURI SYNOD
Panel 05W - - Line 40

Paul George Hamilton, Jr.
PFC - E3 - Army - Regular
173rd Airborne Brigade

21 year old Single, Caucasian, Male
Born on Aug 30, 1946
From DES MOINES, IOWA
His tour of duty began on Nov 23, 1967
Casualty was on Dec 13, 1967
in KONTUM, SOUTH VIETNAM
HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY
ARTILLERY, ROCKET, or MORTAR
Body was recovered
Religion
METHODIST
Panel 31E - - Line 87

Prayer of Remembrance *They grow not old, as we who remain grow old, age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn, at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we shall remember them. We shall remember them.*

Life's a Bitch – and then you die.

David's mother, Eleanor, died of cancer when he was very young. He had an alcoholic father and very little to look forward to. His older brother, Gordon, had been a pilot in the Navy and flew a Willy Fudd (E-1B). His sister, Patty, was married. David was a LRRP returning from a mission. Gordon had to view the body. He was never the same.

Paulie's girlfriend was expecting when he left for Vietnam. He could never quite seem to measure up to what his father expected of him and his solution was to join the Airborne. He was still in orientation camp in Vietnam when Charlie did a mortar attack on his camp. He was killed instantly when a mortar round hit his tent. Paul, Sr. was an Undertaker and he insisted on opening the coffin. He was never the same. I believe they named the grandson Paul George Hamilton III. George was Paul, Sr.'s father.

They couldn't open either casket at their funerals. War is very ugly.

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My son Damon was born in 2/8/71 and his middle name is Paul, we didn't know that David was dead, or it would have been David Paul. I'm just a sentimental old man, or a crusty old curmudgeon depending upon whom you ask. Ron just calls me asshole and a few other nasty names.

The following day they went to check out the bad guys on the west side of town. They couldn't find hide or hair of them and headed for Lancaster. When they heard all of the shooting, they stopped. They consisted of: Charlie, Ron, Clarence, Gary, Derek, Bobbie Joe and Mark. They didn't know how many bad guys there were, but there was one hell of a lot of gunfire. Too much, in fact, to risk getting very close but they did anyway. Charlie and Gary had their M1A rifles and everyone else, except Clarence of course,

had an XM8 with a M320 attached. Clarence had his FAL rifle and a knapsack near full of magazines. He'd finally caved in and installed the suppressor on his rifle.

300-yards is a long way when you're looking over the open sights of a rifle. An FAL is semi-automatic. The XM8 has a Multifunction Integrated Sighting Module (ISM) including 1X red dot reflex sight with integral IR pointer and IR illuminator. The DMAR (SAW) variant has a 4X optic sight. The XM8's were set up as DMAR's without the bipods. They could rock and roll, also called spray and pray. They took the bad guys by surprise and got several before they got the hell out of there. The bad guys had no idea where the fire was coming from and by the time they figured it out, the 7 men were long gone.

"Those guys looked like gangsters out of south central," Ron suggested.

"Is anyone following us?" Clarence asked.

"I think we're in the clear," Charlie responded.

"We'll have to come back, you know. This situation would be perfect for a couple of snipers," Gary observed. "Derek it's time to get you to the range and introduced you to the M1A Super Match rifle."

Derek was a Sergeant First Class with the Arkansas National Guard, the same rank as a Gunny, E-7. The advantage of moving to Flippin was that he wasn't that far from Bolivar, MO., maybe 140 miles. DJ had been at Derek's when the Ebola hit. Junior and Brenda Samples, DJ's grandparents, hadn't made it. The other advantage to living in Flippin was that he got to switch to artillery. The Iowa National Guard had changed its mission while he was in Iraq. They no longer had armor. Assuming there still was an Iowa National Guard. California's seemed to be MIA.

They need to put up a wall for the other conflicts like Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Kosovo and Iraq. If you check out the number of operations during the Cold War and the Post-Cold War eras on Global Security, the US was always sending someone somewhere and getting them killed. They could use a separate panel for each operation and multiple panels for places like Iraq. In a way, America had gotten soft. The country had still wanted to go to war, but didn't expect any casualties. And, the country was still darned slow on erecting memorials to its fallen heroes. Maybe with the Ebola, it didn't matter anymore.

You can usually tell the difference between a real war and a politician's war. Real Wars are called wars, most of the time: WWI, WWII, Korean War and the Vietnam War. Desert Shield and Desert Storm being the notable exception. We can call that the Gulf War. Politician's wars have real neat names like: Urgent Fury, Just Cause, Provide Hope, Restore Hope, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Secure Tomorrow.

Maybe the new operation would be called *Save the Country*. A whole lot of people had died to keep it free and we owed it to them to carry the dream that they died for. They

didn't find any WMD when they got to Iraq anyway because they were all in Syria. I said it before and in the paper on April 27, 2005, the Washington Times reported, "The CIA's chief weapons inspector said he cannot rule out the possibility that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were secretly shipped to Syria before the March 2003 invasion, citing 'sufficiently credible' evidence that WMDs may have been moved there." They could have saved billions and a lot of lives if they'd just asked us. George tried to provoke a war with Syria, but they got smart and pulled out of Lebanon.

Derek was pretty handy with the M1A. So much in fact that Gary gave it to him and went with his XM8 instead. The truth be told, Gary couldn't see 300-yards on a good day and could only see 600-yards with the scope on its highest setting. Gary, however, used the bipod because 100-rounds of .223 were pretty heavy for an old man like him. Wikipedia had something to say about the M29: "The current research and testing showed that the XM29 can be up to 500% more effective than present small arms, but it is still to be seen if all the requirements will be met in the resulting system, especially regarding to the reliability of electronic components, weight (the XM29 currently weighs in at about five and a half kilograms when empty, and nearly seven when loaded) and, last but not at least, the unit price. Some experts have commented that the idea of the XM29 "...seems to make a soldier so expensive to field that he can't be risked in combat. Much like an aircraft carrier."

Misconception: "The XM-8 is a model of efficiency in use: its operation controls are ambidextrous, it has three firing modes (single round, three-round burst, and fully automatic), and can handle a variety of magazines, including a 30 round semi-opaque (to allow the shooter to see how many rounds are left in the magazine) hard plastic magazine, which can be rapidly reloaded in close combat situations, and a 100-round drum (for sustained fire), as well as 10-round weapon qualification magazines and M-16 style metal magazines."

Truth: "The XM8 has fully ambidextrous operating controls including a centrally located charging handle that doubles as an ambidextrous forward assist when required, ambidextrous magazine release, bolt catch, safety/selector lever with semi and full-automatic modes of fire, and release lever for the multiple position collapsible buttstock."

Page 3...

Fact: When they split the XM29 into its component parts, XM8 and XM25, they changed the grenade from 20x28mm to 25x40mm. The other 25mm grenade was the 25x59mm for the XM312. Barrett built the XM109 to fire the later cartridge but abandoned it due to excessive recoil. The US continued development of XM25 and 5 were fielded in Afghanistan in 2010 @ ~\$35,000 each. The weapon will sell for \$25,000 and the first 1,000 rounds were hand loaded at \$1,000 each. The expected cost per round is \$35 when they're in full production. Look up XM25 on Wiki for the rest of the story.

Back to the XM8, maybe they have a different lower receiver group and that dang dealer cheated us again. The videos at Army Times shows a selector with 3 positions and

the demos were semi and full auto only. Maybe that's why we couldn't find the "Burst" position on the selector assembly. The weapon is totally modular and they could make a safe-semi-burst lower receiver. The MP-5 is available in several configurations including a 4-position selector: safe-semi-2 or 3-round burst-full. But we didn't have any MP-05's at that time because FEMA hadn't showed up with their Imperial Storm-troopers. All FEMA really does is provide money. The government tries to buy their way out of everything including: hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and volcanoes.

But the government makes you grovel first. The Governor has to declare it a disaster area and the feds have to agree. As a result of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, New York and Virginia were declared Major Disaster Areas and New Jersey declared an Emergency. In the year 2000, New York and New Jersey declared emergencies over virus threats. Does that mean that a 200-car pileup on the I-5 qualifies as a disaster and you can get a cheap federal loan to replace your car? Nope, sorry, not even if the disaster is ice and freezing rain. Apparently the feds assume that everyone has car insurance. They must not get to California very often. ¿No hablo inglés, qué soy 'insurance'? Strange, you have to have insurance to drive your car into Mexico.

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A lot of the bad guys in Lancaster looked Hispanic, maybe MS-13? Nope, these guys were carrying AK-47's, not M16's. *This is the AK-47 Assault Rifle, the preferred weapon of our enemy. It makes a distinctive sound when fired. The United States' Marines is lookin' for a few good men – you ain't it. Improvise. Adapt. Overcome.* You can learn a lot from the movies, for example, the distinctive sound of AK-47 fire. You also knew the sound if you had been in Kosovo or Iraq. Derek was as good with his new rifle as Charlie was with his and Charlie had his rifle for a very long time. Between the two of them with Mark and Bobby Joe as spotters, a half dozen or more of the bad guys were biting the dust every day.

Sometimes they would come at the bad guys from one direction in the morning and then switch positions and come at them from another direction in the afternoon. The only rule was not to create a pattern or any kind of predictability. One of them would take a target out and then switch positions slightly while the other lined up his shot. The 175-grain BTHP Match ammo made a hole when it exited that you could put your fist in. The sniping went on as long as it could but after 10 days the bad guys wised up. They started to pay attention to the bullet wounds and directing their fire in the general direction of Derek and Charlie. Sixty-eight bad guys weren't capable of shooting back, however.

There were plenty of the up-armored HMMWVs in Barstow equipped as weapons carriers. They were the model M1114 and they brought back 4. One of the sterling features of the M1114 armored HMMWV is the ballistic protection afforded the gunner. Some of them had a machinegun turret on top. The machineguns you can mount include the M60, M240, M249, M2HB and the Mk-19. They mounted the 2 Mk-19s and 2 of the M2HBs on the vehicles and tried to decide when would be the best time to hit the bad guys. Gary suggested Saturday morning around 4am. He explained that in his personal

experience Friday night was party time. It had something to do with Mariachi music they played at USC on Friday nights. He couldn't remember... he'd been hallucinating at the time.

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Two years earlier in 2008 the Pentagon and the Congress got together and did a follow-up on the Future Combat Systems and the Air Forces programs. The Air Force originally wanted 750 of the F-22 Raptors which were slated to replace the aging F-15's. Dick Cheney cut that to 648. That went to 438 and then to 339. Cost overruns on the fighter had cut the Air Forces ability to buy the fighter down in the region of about 230 planes. However, the final number actually acquired was 183.

The first F-35, the Joint Strike Fighter had rolled off the assembly line in 2005. It was the A model that the Air Force planned on buying. The Air Force intended to replace the F-16 Falcon and the A-10 Warthog. The B model was the STOVL model intended to replace the Harrier and the C model was the carrier version intended to replace the long-gone A-6 Intruder and the early model F/A-18's. The Navy had intended on retiring the F-14B by 2007 and the F-14D by 2008. However since the D model could deliver the JDAM's, it extended their service lives until at least 2010. They probably didn't want to put Tom Cruise out of job as a Top Gun instructor. Poor Tom, the planes were all retired on 22 September 2006.

The tradeoff had come on the F-35. In order to have the original 339 F-22's the Air Force traded off F-35A's. The F-35 would probably never get into full production because that wouldn't begin until the testing ended and they had 3 different models to test. The government had no expectations of an epidemic that would kill of 55% of the population when they were doing all of that planning. With the prospect of no wars in the near future, they sure as hell didn't need the F-35's, notwithstanding the fact that there probably wasn't anyone around to build them anymore.

If there still was a CNG, it and all of the National Guards all over the country had most certainly been absorbed by the active duty military when the pandemic hit. The military was missing in the Antelope Valley as far as the 4 amigos knew. They sure as hell weren't running any test programs out of Edwards any more. Charlie wouldn't know he worked for NASA, not for Edwards and he sure hadn't been called back to work. The best guess the guys could make was that the military was MOPPED up and dealing with problems in the big cities. Since they hadn't left the Antelope Valley, LA could be crawling with soldiers and they'd never had a clue.

"So you think if we hit them at 4:00 on Saturday morning we can take them out?" Ron asked.

"I think so, but I honestly have no idea," Gary admitted. "You saw me in the hospital, the hallucination only got worse until they took me off that medication. Things that only happened once or that I imagined kept happening over and over."

“There are a lot of liquor stores in Lancaster,” Clarence observed. “Since we never attacked at night and we haven’t been near them in a couple of days, they may have lightened up. Saturday morning sounds as good as any other time. What I want to know is how we get them out of wherever they’ve gone to sleep it off?”

“Maybe we could leave the silencers off the rifles and shoot a couple,” Ron suggested. “That might draw them out.”

“That would mean having the 4 of us between the large weapons and the bad guys,” Charlie pointed out.

“Anyone have a better idea?”

“You’d have the same effect by lobbing in a few of the 40mm grenades,” Derek replied. “The effective range on the .50 cal is 1,800m and the Mk-19 is 1,500m. We would probably want to get within 1,000 meters to have a high probability of kill.”

“There’s no way we can go house-to-house with the HMMWVs, you know.”

“I don’t care either way,” Charlie said. “We going to end up using tracer directed fire on the Ma Deuces anyway. When we were sniping, we found targets all over Lancaster. This might not be as easy as it sounds.”

“Is there any way we could draw them out and get them to pursue us?” Clarence asked. “We could set an ambush. It’s not like we short on the Claymore’s.”

“In order to do something like that we’d have to spend the next couple of nights lining the side of some road with Claymores that were somehow wired together. If we set up 10th Street West, it would work if we could get them bunched up.”

“It’s open country on the east of 10th Street West from Avenue K to Avenue L,” Charlie pointed out.

“The Field Manual says the ideal range is 50 meters. If we set them about 40 meters off the road and blocked 10th Street at Avenue L, we might make it work. We’d have to hide 3 of the vehicles on the west side of the road and the bait could operate from the Costco parking lot.”

“We’ll use the conventional blasting caps and det cord. We can set off all the mines with a single detonator or two if we double arm the mines,” Charlie suggested.

“Fine with me, where would we get 2 miles of det cord? And how many Claymores would that take?”

“The Field manual says at 25 meter intervals so 1,500 meters would take 60. That would be about 3,000 meters of det cord.

“Det cord is an explosive and there aren’t many explosive dealer’s in the Valley,” Gary pointed out. “Maybe we need to try something else.”

“What does det cord look like?” Clarence asked. “I saw up some fuse at Barstow in one of their igloos. It’s big spools of bright orange cord.”

“I printed a picture of det cord off the net for one of my stories,” Gary said. “Let me see if I can find it.”

A few minutes later Gary returned with the picture and Clarence identified the 100-grain det cord. They didn’t have any choice and very little time, they left for Barstow immediately. They found their 100-grain det cord, C-4 explosive, more Claymores, detonators and caps. They also found some Barrett M109 rifles and some of the ammo that went with them. Everything was loaded into a couple of borrowed U-Haul trailers and they towed the trailers back to Palmdale and drove back 4 more of the M1114 HMMWVs with the machinegun turrets. It was the wee hours and they were tired. The following night they’d plant the Claymores and tie them all together with the 100-grain det cord.

The old men started placing the mines and wiring them together with the det cord on Thursday night. Using the little connectors and the tip kits Derek and Mark laid the det cord while the others planted the mines. They worked using flashlights with red cellophane over the lens and by morning had the 60 Claymores planted and connected. When they got home, they mounted the 4 other M2HB machine guns on the 4 new M1114 HMMWVs and went to bed. They were going to have a very long night on Friday night.

“Good morning,” Ron grumped.

“It’s 4 o’clock in the afternoon, jerk,” Gary grumped. “I made a pot of AA coffee; it’s the pot on the spare burner.”

“That stuff would wake the dead,” Ron laughed. “Where’s the Sweet and Low?”

“In the bottle on the table, right where it always is.”

“Kiss my ass partner,” Ron replied.

“Point it out,” Gary responded. “By the way, we lost our natural gas around noon. I got Dick to swap out all of our jets and to convert the generator to LP. As soon as you’re able, he’s ready to go to your house and switch you over. He already did Clarence’s house and there’s no way to do Charlie’s until we clean out that bunch in Lancaster.”

“Maybe they still have natural gas in Lancaster,” Ron suggested.

“We won’t know until tomorrow, will we? We should have looked around Barstow better, partner. I’ll bet we could have found some of those MP-5N’s.”

“We don’t need those, Gar-Bear. Swap out the barrel on your XM8 if you want a sub machinegun,” Ron suggested.

“That would be pretty neat. A sub machinegun with a suppressor and a 100-round drum magazine.”

The only thing the dealer hadn’t provided was the alternate lower receiver assembly for the XM8’s, assuming it even existed. It took Gary all of 5 minutes to switch over his XM8 to the 9” barrel and install the shorter fore stocks. He was all set to rock and roll and with 5 of the 100-round drum magazines, he could spray and pray to his heart’s content. One thing they seemed to have enough of at Barstow was the Interceptor body armor with the inserts. It came in at 20#, just like Derek had always told Gary.

They had seen very little of the CHP or the LA County Sheriff’s Department since the Plague hit. Either they were all dead, or they were occupied elsewhere. Darlene said that she hadn’t heard from Johnny since the epidemic started. There’s never a cop around when you need one, but when you don’t, there they stand with a grin on their face and a ticket book in their hands. Most of the cops in California had started carrying M16’s in their cars after the North Hollywood shootout. MS-13 was still better armed than the cops because the cops’ guns were semi-auto only and MS-13 had full-auto weapons. The CHP had bought a whole load of used M16’s from the Army and converted them to semi-auto only and every car had an M16 in the trunk.

On February 28, 1997, two bank robbers armed with AK-47s robbed the Bank of America in North Hollywood, CA. After 5 minutes, 3 civilians and 9 police officers had been hit and a TAC (tactical) alert was issued. Ultimately, 350 officers were called to the scene. The suspects also fired on news helicopters. The suspects fired approximately 1,100 rounds of ammunition in one of the most violent shootouts in US law enforcement history.

The incident highlighted the growing discrepancies between police offensive and defensive technologies and the technologies available to criminals. Video footage of the incident clearly shows bullets fired by the police officers impacting the suspects with little to no effect, mostly due to ballistic armor worn by the suspects which was able to stop the .38 caliber and 9mm projectiles fired by the officers. The ineffectiveness of the rounds in penetrating the ballistic armor of the suspects lead to a nationwide movement of arming some squad cars and officers with small-caliber assault rifles like the M16 assault rifle to allow first responders the ability to effectively combat heavily armed and armored subjects.

The Rifleman – Part I – Chapter 6 – Duck and Cover

They had quite the mixture of weapons when they set off to save the Antelope Valley from the bad guys. 2 Mk-19's and 2 Ma Deuces, they couldn't find anyone else to drive a HMMWV (there are 2 M's and 1 W, another typo at Global Security that I was dumb enough to copy) plus an assortment of personal weapons. They installed the caps on the det cord and waited until 4am to start the music. A few M430 grenades really shook up the bad guys. When it appeared that they didn't know which direction the grenades had come from, they fired some more just to help those dummies out. The only reasonable explanation for the bad guys chasing after them was that the bad guys assumed they had M79's or M203's. Anyway here they came. A few minutes later the first car came to the barricade and skidded to a stop.

The signal to set off the Claymores came when Mark plopped a M430 into the last car in the procession. A few seconds later, 60 Claymore mines, covering an area of about 1,500 meters, went off simultaneously. Between the Ma Deuces and the Mk-19's the bad guys didn't stand much of a chance and were caught like rats in the trap. A fully automatic .223 rifle is a nasty business when you more or less have 500+ guys surrounded with 2 Ma Deuces, 2 Mk-19's and 4 of the XM8's with 100-round drum magazines. The 8 fellas didn't mind shooting them, but they were danged if they would clean up the mess. There's probably no such thing as the perfect ambush, but in order to shoot at you they have to see you, in the dark. They could see the machine guns but the gunners were pretty well protected. They couldn't see the XM8's because they had M4-FA flashhiders. The flashhiders increase the length of the barrel and increase the velocity of the .223 round actually making the weapons more accurate.

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After the ambush, their main concern was that the cops or the Army would show up and accuse them of murder. Their 8 HMMWVs didn't exactly look like Volkswagen Beetles. The homes in the housing tract were supposed to have RV access to their backyards. That's why Dan and Dawn had sold out and moved back in 2004. It had turned out to be an unfulfilled promise in some cases. The HMMWVs were 85" wide, not counting the mirrors. 4557 and 4563 Moonraker Road were 2 of 4 houses in the tract that had huge back yards. The former Green Beret, Lance, lived in 4563. He was familiar with darned near every weapon in the world that had come out before he'd retired from the Army. The old rumor about Special Forces Officers not making rank very fast must have been true. He had retired after 20 some years and was only a Major. He said he'd help defend the housing tract, but he'd seen enough of war to last him a lifetime. Lance offered his backyard to park the HMMWVs.

I guess if you can't have a Gunny around, a Sergeant First Class and a retired Green Beret Major will just have to make do; it's not a perfect world. With Lancaster restored to some resemble of order, Charlie and Ruth moved back home and Ron and Clarence did the same. Whether or not that would be wise could only be established in the coming days. They were in good shape in terms of power and except for being a little short on

water, could manage. Of the 4 amigos, only Charlie had a shelter. Ruth and he had worked over the basement to their house pretty good and it was basic but an effective bomb shelter, if need be. The upper and lower basement doors had been replaced by security doors. Since Charlie was a mechanic, he'd built his own LUWA system using a series of replaceable HEPA filters. The only things he'd had to purchase were the blast valve and the filters.

Ron, Gary and Clarence had been hoping that they might get enough notice of a nuclear attack that they could get to eastern California. Building a basement in Los Angeles County, California had been prohibitively expensive before the epidemic. After the epidemic, there wasn't anyone available to build one, regardless of how much money you had. There was also a question of whether or not a person really needed a bomb shelter. You wouldn't need a basement if you assumed that there wouldn't be any more wars and that there wouldn't be any natural disasters. Why would an epidemic preclude other disasters? The odds on another earthquake were still the same. The ground sure didn't know that people had gotten sick.

Most of the natural disasters that could happen were related to the ground, wind, fire, water or disease. The unnatural disasters, e.g., man-made disasters, that could occur included accidents, criminal acts, explosions, chemical spills, mechanical failures of all sorts, economic failures and war, including thermonuclear war. This time around it had been an epidemic so large it qualified as a pandemic. Maybe 2.7 billion out of 6 billion had survived. Nobody seemed to know and there wasn't any radio or TV to tell them. By *The Three Amigos* being prepared and more or less having a plan they'd survived the pandemic. Their preparations had dragged in a 4th amigo and he'd come out of the deal every bit as well as they did.

Depending on how you reckoned, the numerous Calderas in the US and around the world were either overdue to erupt or weren't going to go for 300 generations, maybe more. Where could you really go in the country to escape every natural disaster? Nowhere, was the answer. The people of Lancaster cleaned up the bodies and collected the weapons. They likely wouldn't get caught flatfooted again. The President had a domestic agenda and whenever he came out from under the rock he was hiding under (Mt. Weather?) he'd organize the military and get rescue operations underway with whatever resources were available. That's what every President in the history had done and regardless of politics, that was what Obama would do.

There were problems, but they weren't insurmountable. Losing 55% of the population did wonders for the Social Security Trust fund. There was probably enough Social Security money now to last the country until the next century. The people in California and probably the remainder of the country had picked up a gun, eventually and defended themselves. It seemed more than likely that the people so opposed to firearms hadn't survived. If the virus didn't get them then the bad guys probably did.

Most people didn't stop and think about the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution. People against personal ownership of weapons said the Amendment was outdated and reflect-

ed a time long since past. People who supported the 2nd Amendment knew in their hearts that the need to use a firearm wasn't limited to the oft chance that someone would attempt to overthrow the government. It existed so that people could defend themselves and the things the country stood for when the government either wasn't able or was unwilling to do so.

The League of Nations hadn't worked out. Neither had the United Nations. Perhaps that was because the organizations were constituted of many nations, all with vested interests in one thing or another. This wasn't Stardate 2300 when people all got along. At best, that was 200 years in the future and at worst it would never happen. Before the Russians launched Sputnik, there really wasn't a high priority space race. The US had been working on the Vanguard rocket, a dismal failure. Sputnik changed that and they put men on the moon to collect rocks and look around. In the movie *Meteor* made in 1979, the US had a space borne system called *Hercules* and the Russians had one the Americans called *Peter the Great*. Have you gotten out your telescope and looked for either?

Attacking an incoming asteroid wasn't as simple as agreeing to both use your existing systems and hoping for the best. It didn't totally work out in the movie and it most certainly couldn't happen now. There was some darned treaty that basically outlawed Ronald Reagan's Star Wars defense. The Russian space program was essentially a creature of an age long passed anyway. A Minuteman III rocket couldn't reach high enough to do any good and neither could the Peacekeeper or a Trident D.

About the biggest earthquake possible on the planet was the 9.5 they'd had in Chile in 1960. It was simple mechanics and there wasn't a fault line long enough to generate a 10.5 earthquake. You could ask another question. How many other disaster had the virus caused? Train wrecks, planes falling from the sky or refrigerated chemicals exploding when we lost the electricity? First we all had to clean up our individual messes and then we could think about rebuilding our shattered countries. The 4 amigos had only dealt with a single gang of bad guys; how many more were there roaming the country?

While the subject of earthquakes is handy, an earthquake produces 2 measures anyway. There's the Richter scale, which measures magnitude, e.g., 8.5. And there is also the Mercalli scale, which is the measurement of damage the earthquake causes.

Richter Magnitudes (M_L) are based on the movement of an instrument needle and increases logarithmically, 10 times for each number jump, so M_L 8 is not twice as large as M_L 4, it is 10,000 times as large! Richter Magnitude is an open-ended scale.

Moment Magnitude (M_W) is the modern version of the Richter Magnitudes. Moment Magnitude is based on the energy released by an earthquake and is also logarithmic, but by a factor of 32 not 10. M_W 4 releases 65,000,000 Btu while M_W 8 releases 69,000,000,000,000 Btu. The largest Moment Magnitude ever recorded in world history was 9.5 and occurred in Chile in May of 1960. The second largest ever recorded was 9.2 and occurred in Alaska on Good Friday of 1964. Mercalli Intensity (MM) is based on

actual observations of the resulting damage and therefore cannot be measured on instruments.

The volume of debris ejected by a volcano is measured in kilometers³. Yellowstone's largest eruption occurred 2.1 million years ago and ejected 2,450km³ of ash or 585mi³ in non-metric terms. In February 2001, the largest recorded volcanic eruptions in the solar system occurred on Io, a moon of Jupiter. The 1883 Krakatau eruption had the explosive force of 200 Megatons of TNT. Compare that to the largest volcanic eruptions in Earth's history: Mount Mazama (Crater Lake), 10,000 Megatons; Tambora, 1,000 Megatons; and the Great Yellowstone eruptions, hundreds of thousands of megatons

You could have a volcanic eruption in the middle of a flu epidemic or maybe during a bad snowstorm. You could have a 9.3 earthquake and a tsunami the day after Christmas. Nature didn't watch the calendar or the TV for that matter. And as some might say, Nature was nothing more than a bull-headed woman. One thing was certain; you'd better pay attention and give Nature her due.

It took until the fall of the following year before schools were up and running. The school system tried to cover 4 years of missed learning into a 2-year period by running year-round classes. Charlie finally got called back to work, but it was on the flight line at Edwards Main Base, not at NASA. The terrorists had used nuclear weapons to take out the power. There was no choice except for the government to relocate the power plants and start over. That was deferred until the government officially declared that the pandemic was over. It didn't look like power would be restored for as long as 4 years. I can't tell if the manufacturer ever intended that those residential generators run for as long as they would need to. It didn't make any difference, because if you wanted power in the Antelope Valley, you supplied it yourself.

The easiest fix was the natural gas and that was brought back first. They still had about half of their propane and almost no money to refill the tanks. Hell, nobody had any money until they got back to work. The government offered \$7 an hour to people who needed work and were willing to work on rebuilding the infrastructure. That hit California especially hard because of the cost of living. If you subsist on beans and rice long enough do you start speaking Spanish? Only if they're pinto beans or so I'm told.

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Just to recap, Charlie is the rifleman and he's from Lancaster, CA. He got hooked up with the 3 old farts from Palmdale one day at the rifle range down on Angeles Forest Highway. Charlie worked for NASA at Edwards AFB until TSHTF. That was an Ebola-Sudan pandemic that killed 55% of the population everywhere. Charlie and *The Three Amigos* were staying at Moon Shadows housing tract when some bad guys came up out of LA and grabbed Lancaster. With their usual flair, the fellas took all of their stolen government weapons and wiped out the bad guys without even working up a sweat. Thereafter, everybody moved back home and Charlie got a new job at Edwards working on the flight line. Charlie is a jet engine mechanic by trade.

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“Dad, I’ve got to get back to Flippin,” Derek said.

“Flippin what, son?” Gary kidded, “Pancakes? Scrambled eggs?”

“You always were a smart ass, Dad,” Derek said, shaking his head.

“I’ve got a PhD in sarcasm, kid,” Gary laughed.

“That only means piled higher and deeper.”

“That’s about right. Ok, if you have to go, take the Super Match rifle with you; my eyes aren’t so good any more. You’d better take the other M109 rifle while you’re at it, their illegal in California.”

“And the XM8’s aren’t?”

“Kid, we’ll keep what we own and return everything else before the Army or Marines show up. The stuff that we bought isn’t on anybody’s books. You load up the portable generator and take it too. You may not have electricity when you and your family get home.”

“What about me?” Damon asked.

“Sorry Damon, I don’t have any model rockets, take a few of the LAW’s.”

The kids left and that was the end of the story. All of TOM’s readers died in the great plague and couldn’t post comments anymore. TOM was only in it for the glory anyway. There isn’t anything glorious about being a writer without any readers.

Charlie – The Rifleman – Part II – Chapter 1 – Where Has Everyone Gone?

Charlie was called the Rifleman by *The Three Amigos* back when they were trying to survive the Ebola virus. The virus had ended and he'd gotten involved in a rescue of people in his hometown of Lancaster. Once everything had settled down, Charlie had gotten back to work at Edwards. Formerly an employee of NASA, Charlie had to take whatever work he could get and ended up on the flight line at the main base. What with work and all, Charlie didn't get to the range on Angeles Forest Highway very often and he more or less lost touch with *The Three Amigos*. When Charlie went to look *The Three Amigos* up, Ron had moved to New Mexico, Gary had moved to Arkansas and Clarence had moved to Alabama.

Just to recap, Charlie is the Rifleman and he's from Lancaster, CA. He got hooked up with the 3 old farts from Palmdale one day at the rifle range down on Angeles Forest Highway. Charlie worked for NASA at Edwards AFB until TSHTF. That was an Ebola-Sudan pandemic that killed of 55% of the population of everywhere. Charlie and The Three Amigos were staying at Moon Shadows housing tract when some bad guys came up out of LA and grabbed Lancaster. With their usual flair, the fellas took all of their stolen government weapons and wiped out the bad guys without even working up a sweat. Thereafter, everybody moved back home and Charlie got a new job at Edwards working on the flight line. Charlie is a jet engine mechanic by trade.

Charles T. Tunis was married to Ruth Edna Rogers Tunis and had been for about 12 years now. Charlie worked at Edwards AFB for NASA. He was a jet engine mechanic and got to work on some very interesting flying vehicles. Charlie was only 30 and had served at Edwards as a mechanic when he was in the Air Force right out of high school. Ruth was born and raised in Lancaster and had met Charlie during his last year in the Air Force. Ruth and Charlie had 2 children, Francine who was born in 1999, and little David, who was born 2002. Charlie was 35 in 2008, Ruth was 33 and the kids were 9 and 6. They were presently 11 and 8.

The Rifleman has quite an assortment of weapons. He started out with a Mitchell Mauser. He followed that with a Springfield Armory M1A Super Match rifle equipped with a Swarovski Habright PV 4-16x50mm P L riflescope with a TDS-4 reticule and a Surefire FA762S suppressor. They also had a pair of XM8 rifle systems that included Surefire M4-FA suppressors with FA mounts on all of the barrels. The rifles were complete with the M320 grenade launchers and the LSS shotgun modules. Charlie had a fair quantity of M406 HE grenades. Charlie and Ruth also had a pair of H&K USP Tactical pistols in .45 ACP with suppressors. If you remember the story, you also remember that Obama had gotten a law passed that outlawed semiautomatic firearms.

Charlie's M1A had the McMillian Marine Corps camo stock and he had plenty of Black Hills 175gr BTHP and a large quantity of 7.62x51mm surplus, courtesy of *The Three Amigos*. Ruth and he also had lots of .45ACP and .223 Lake City overruns. Ruth, as you'll recall was quite a marksman in her own right. Their home in Lancaster is equipped with an Onan 15kw residential standby unit and a 30,000-gallon propane tank,

courtesy of Linda's senile father. Charlie had added a Mossberg Persuader® shotgun to his growing arsenal. The shotgun was the model 500 with a 20" barrel and 8-shot magazine. Charlie had 3 cases of 8mm and about 2,000 rounds of the Black Hills 7.62x51mm ammo. His 12-gauge ammo was Federal tactical ammo evenly divided between Hydra-Shok HP slugs and 00 buck. He had started out with no. 1 buckshot so he also had some of it. Rather than buy any more guns, Charlie started to try and match the 3 old men in his preparations. Sears carried a 6.3kw generator made by Generac for \$1,100. Charlie had also slowly purchased 300 gallons of gasoline for the Sears Generac generator, 10-gallons at a time. For additional details, you may wish to read the original story. Charlie and Ruth had lots of everything. After he got to know Ron and the other 2 Amigos, they had even more. Francine and David are back in school in Lancaster and had switched over to the Christian school.

For all of their supposed wisdom, there were a few places that Ruth and Charlie had departed from *The Three Amigos*. For example, *The Three Amigos* had loaded up on equipment from the fella in Gonzales, Texas, Shane Conner. That had been a good idea as far as it went, but they weren't so smart, because Frugal sold Potassium Iodate which was just as good as Potassium Iodide and a whole lot cheaper. To make matters worse, they were all screwed up on their facts and the Ebola virus hadn't killed off the Squirrels. Frugal just had a problem with another ISP and when he found a new one and the Internet was up and running, there was the website, intact.

Which only goes to prove that nothing is carved in stone. All of the people they thought were dead were posting on the site and that couldn't have been a coincidence. The average age of those old guys, assuming they were still alive somewhere was about 68. Isn't that the age when a person gets senile? Maybe they'd pickled their brains or something; they were all a bunch of drunks.

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July 4, 2010...

The year now is 2010 and Obama is President. All semi-automatic firearms have been outlawed. Are we up to speed?

"How close are we to having all of our supplies replenished?" Charlie asked.

"It's going to take another 3 months or so, honey. We used a lot of them during the pandemic. According to the TV, not as many people died in the epidemic as they first thought. It seems that people with a European background have a bit of natural immunity. Anyway, the CDC has the vaccine now and we should get vaccinated, just in case."

"Gary was always talking about how one of two things was going to happen. Either we'd get a dose of radiation, from terrorists or from a nuclear war; or, we'd have a natural disaster. He kept talking about Yellowstone. According to what he said, it blew up 2.1 million years ago and then again 1.3 million years ago and finally 640 thousand years

ago. He also said that in between the Long Valley Caldera blew up 760 thousand years ago. Gary seemed to think that if it came to a natural disaster of major proportions, it might be one of those two Calderas.”

“We’ve already had an Ebola pandemic, isn’t that enough, Charlie?” Ruth asked.

“You’d think so but Gary said that bad things came in three’s.”

“Is there an interval on Long Valley?”

“He didn’t seem to know, but there probably is. He said he found something on the subject, but he never got around to telling me what he found.”

“Did he say which one he expected to blow up?”

“He didn’t say, honey. All of the TV shows have focused on Yellowstone, but I had the impression that Long Valley scared him more.”

“What’s the possibility of one of them exploding as a super volcano and triggering the other one?”

“I’m a jet engine mechanic, not a geologist. He said that if Long Valley went, it might spare portions of the country to the west. I seem to recall that the program we saw on Yellowstone said the same thing.”

“I’m going to get on the computer tomorrow and start researching the subject,” Ruth announced. “A super volcano would be a TEOTWAWKI event wouldn’t it?”

“There would be ash in the air for a year or more. If a super volcano were to erupt in the northern hemisphere, we could expect to lose one or two growing seasons, minimum, according to Gar-Bear.”

“Is Gary a geologist? How come he knows so much about this stuff?”

“I think he said he was an accountant, honey. Apparently he got pretty good at researching topics of interest on the Internet. He made a remark that I didn’t quite understand, referring to the Long Valley Caldera.”

“What did he say?”

“Long Valley went into a period of unrest in the late ‘70’s. That died down in the late ‘90’s. He said it was the lull before the storm.”

“I’m going to check on Long Valley first and follow up on Yellowstone.”

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“You look tired, tough day at work?” Ruth asked.

“It was a hot one today. Is there any beer in the refrigerator?”

“I sort of figured you would be thirsty when you got home. I bought enough to last all week.”

Sure enough, there was a 12-pak of Silver Bullets. Things were much more expensive now that the epidemic was over. The gas prices had come down to about \$3 a gallon but Charlie didn't know if they would hold or go back up. He had his 300-gallon emergency supply if there was a problem, but he really didn't want to touch it. As long as he kept it stabilized with PRI-G, it would last forever.

“So, what did you find out about Long Valley when you went on the net?” Charlie asked.

“The USGS established an observatory around 1980. They only have 5 of those in the entire county. One is at Yellowstone, the second is at Long Valley, the third is at Mt. St. Helens and the other two are in Alaska and Hawaii. The USGS must be expecting something to happen or why would they have a volcanic observatory?”

“You tell me, I'm not a geologist.”

“It has a resurgent dome but it hasn't grown much since it formed. From what I read today, the principal problem is that the vents are clogging up. Most of the earthquake swarms they've had are on the southern edge of the dome. I said that the dome hadn't grown much, but that's relative Charlie. In '79-'80, it rose 25cm. Late in '89 they had a magna intrusion under Mammoth. A south-moat earthquake swarm on June 28 to 30, 1992, is particularly noteworthy, not because of its intensity but because of its timing. This swarm began within seconds after the S-wave from the 7.3 Landers earthquake of June 28, 1982, passed through the Caldera. As it turned out, many areas across the western United States showed an abrupt increase in local seismicity rates following the Landers earthquake, providing the first clearly documented case of remotely triggered seismicity by a large, distant earthquake. At Long Valley Caldera, the shear waves from the Landers earthquake also triggered a transient, Caldera-wide uplift that reached a peak strain of 0.3ppm 5 to 6 days after the Landers event.”

“Ruth, if I wanted a lesson in geology, I'd take a class at AV College.”

“You want the short version?”

“Please, it's been a long day.”

“Gary was right; it's going to blow someday, probably sooner than later. When it blew the last time, it put out 580km³ of ash. Some of that ash fell in this area. I had time to check out Yellowstone too. Two of the three ash fields covered this area with ash.

That's not what bothers me, honey. The Landers quake caused activity at Long Valley. If either one of the Calderas blow, it could trigger the other."

"It sounds like the big one could trigger activity at the Caldera," Charlie replied. "It also sounds like Long Valley is overdue."

"So is Yellowstone, honey."

"I need another beer. You're saying that we have 3 disasters that could happen and all 3 of them are overdue. No wait; you didn't mention the big one, that was me. Still..."

"Here's your beer," Ruth handed Charlie a second. "You're right about the big one; the San Andreas is overdue, too."

Ruth got out a glass, added ice, dusted off the pint of Jack Daniel's, poured, added Squirt and joined Charlie. It had been one of those days for her, too. She had only spent 3-4 hours on the net. Gary used to spend hours every day on the net. How did he keep from going back to drinking? She didn't have an answer, but Gary must have been a fatalist.

Fatalism: 1) The doctrine that all events are predetermined by fate and are therefore unalterable; and, 2) Acceptance of the belief that all events are predetermined and inevitable.

Evidence seemed to suggest that magma was pooling under both Long Valley and Yellowstone. What if the big one came along and triggered the Long Valley Caldera to let loose and that, in turn, triggered Yellowstone? Would all of that seismic activity trigger the New Madrid fault, in turn? What would the US look like if it had a couple of big ones and two of its Calderas erupted as super volcanoes? Fatalism or not, there are some things that mankind can't even predict, let alone control. Ruth hadn't even followed up on what would happen if the New Madrid Fault let loose. Given the right set of circumstances, the US could get in deep doo-doo. What if a category 5 hurricane hit Florida and a major weather event in the Midwest triggered one of those swarms of tornadoes? If the San Andreas Fault picked that very moment to let loose and it triggered the Long Valley Caldera, which in turn caused Yellowstone to let go and that triggered the New Madrid Fault, the US would look like it had been hit by World War III.

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Chapter 2 – Last Minute Preparations

There wasn't much that Charlie and Ruth had to do in terms of last minute preparations. Everything was controlled by the amount of money they had available to spend. They could run all of their appliances on natural gas or, in an emergency, propane. Ruth had told Charlie it would take 3 months to top off their food stores. They also had to finish topping off that 30k propane tank. All Charlie could do was keep working and try to get some overtime to make it easier on Ruth to accomplish the task sooner, rather than later.

Without doubt, they were probably the most prepared family in Lancaster, California, but how could a family prepare for the end of the world if what they'd talked about on July 5, 2010 really happened? One problem was their location. Lancaster is only about 20-25 miles east of the San Andreas Fault. It is also only about 15-20 miles north of the fault where it passes through Palmdale. They had earthquake proofed their home to the extent that they could. All of the furniture was strapped to the walls with earthquake straps and everything on the shelves was held in place with earthquake putty. The kitchen cabinets all had latching doors, a real pain in the butt, but necessary in earthquake country. If the house stood, most of their possessions would remain intact and in place.

Ruth and Charlie had retrofitted the basement into an efficient bomb shelter. Charlie had built his own LUWA ventilation system and they had a tornado door at the top of the stairs and an even heavier door at the bottom. It was an older home and it had its own well, put in before Lancaster had water lines reaching that far north. The well hadn't been used in years, but a contractor had serviced the well and replaced the pump, giving them their own water supply, if needed. Although the house was connected to the city sewer, it also had its own septic tank and drainage field. It was a minor matter to switch it over, if needed.

The basement only had an 86" ceiling since they done the retrofit. Charlie had put in a ceiling of 2x12's and laid solid concrete block in the ceiling to give them some protection against radiation. It had meant a lot of extra posts in the basement to support the weight of the ceiling, but it worked. They had cut holes in the basement floor and every post sat on its own concrete pier. The retrofit had taken an entire summer. They were protected against radioactive fallout, but somehow that didn't seem to be so important. Charlie had Ruth hire a Structural Engineer to check over the basement to determine if it could withstand the big one. The Engineer said that the basement ceiling was overbuilt and was good up to at least 9.0.

Charlie finally found Gary when he went to Frugal's website. Gary was still writing stories but he was showing a location of Flippin, Arkansas. This prompted Charlie to send Gary an email through the website.

"Dear Gary,

"You 3 guys just up and disappeared on us. What happened?"

“Ruth has been on the net and it looks to her as if you were right. Did you know that the Landers quake caused seismic activity at the Long Valley Caldera? We had a Structural Engineer check over the shelter in the basement. He said that the ceiling could withstand a 9.0 earthquake.

“Is there anywhere in the country that would be safe if both the Long Valley and Yellowstone Calderas both went at the same time?”

“Charlie”

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“Dear Charlie,

“Get one of those maps of the Lava Creek ash bed, the Huckleberry Ridge ash bed, the Bishop ash bed and the Mesa Falls ash bed. I think that you’ll find that northern California, Oregon and Washington didn’t have any ash falls. However, that puts you up against another problem.

“The geology of the North Coast is distinct from the rest of California. Geologists and seismologists find this region of special interest because of the Mendocino triple junction, a place where three plates, the Gorda, the North American and the Pacific, are in contact. This unique geologic setting makes the North Coast vulnerable to earthquakes from a variety of sources. North of the triple junction, the Gorda plate and its northern extension, the Juan de Fuca plate, move eastward on a collision course with the North American plate. The Gorda plate slowly descends beneath the North American plate along the Cascadia subduction zone. Most scientists believe that the upper 50 or so miles of the contact between the Gorda and North American plates are locked. This boundary is called the megathrust. A thrust fault slants gently like a ramp relative to the earth’s surface. Earthquakes along a thrust fault push the rock above the ramp up and over the rock beneath it. The Northridge earthquake in 1994 occurred along a thrust fault. In subduction zones, the boundary between the plates resembles a giant thrust fault, extending hundreds of miles in length. The locked part of the subduction interface is known as the megathrust. All of the world’s greatest earthquakes (magnitude 8.5 and larger) are associated with ruptures of megathrusts.

“The last great subduction zone earthquake occurred about 300 years ago. There are no written records of past Cascadia earthquakes but their effects are recorded in sediments, trees and the oral history of native peoples. Studies suggest that these earthquakes recur with intervals on the order of hundreds of years. Scientific evidence increasingly suggests the eventual recurrence of such earthquakes. Remember what happened off Sumatra in December of 2004?”

“Why do you think I got the hell out of California? I may not be better off in Arkansas, but all I have to worry about now is a nuclear war or a tornado.

“BTW, Ron moved to Cedar Hill, New Mexico and Clarence moved to Birmingham, Alabama.

“Gary”

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“I got an email back from Gary.”

“What did he have to say, Charlie?”

“He said that there was nowhere to run to and nowhere to hide,” Charlie laughed. “I wonder if they have earthquakes on the Moon?”

“Probably not, but they might have moonquakes.”

“Gary told me that in February 2001, the largest recorded volcanic eruptions in the solar system occurred on Io, a moon of Jupiter,” Charlie replied.

“We could match that if Long Valley and Yellowstone both let loose at the same time, you know,” Ruth frowned.

“Heaven forbid. Don’t even suggest such a thing, Ruth.”

The compound Caldera that formed during the climactic first-cycle Huckleberry Ridge eruption – largest of the three – spanned at least 80 kilometers from Island Park (at the margin of the basalt-covered Snake River Plain, west of Yellowstone National Park), past the northern Teton Range and Jackson Hole Valley on the south, to the center of the Yellowstone Plateau. The second-cycle Henrys Fork Caldera is the smallest of the three, approximately 20 kilometers; both it and the surface outcrop of the Mesa Falls Tuff are restricted to the Island Park area. The third cycle began with the eruption of a series of voluminous rhyolitic lavas from all sectors of a growing fracture system that embraced two adjacent ring-fracture zones. The compound third-cycle Yellowstone Caldera, related to the Lava Creek Tuff eruption, is 70×40 kilometers across in the center of the Yellowstone Plateau. The Caldera is resurgent, with an early post-collapse dome uplifted within each of its two segments, followed by emplacement of early post-resurgence rhyolitic lavas from the enclosing ring-fracture zones.

Subject to correction 70km×40km is 2,800 km², larger than the eruption on Io, which covered 1,900 km². The first eruption at Yellowstone occurred 2.1 million years ago and produced the largest Caldera. It produced 2.45 times the volume of ash that the eruption 640,000 years ago produced. Did I multiply something wrong or did the scientists who described the eruption on Io say something wrong. Yellowstone #1 = 2,450 km³, Yellowstone #2 = 280 km³, Yellowstone #3 = 1,000 km³ and Long Valley = 580 km³. The size of the Long Valley Caldera is 1,500 km² and the size of Yellowstone Caldera #3 is

2,100 km². (I found a picture of Conway Summit on the web. Conway Summit is where I killed my Pacific Black tailed deer in 1964. My short story, The Hunter, takes place in that area.)

Overdue geologic events:

1. Yellowstone Super Volcano
2. Long Valley Super Volcano
3. The Big One on the San Andreas Fault
4. Gorda and North American plate megathrust

3 of 4 of those overdue events are overdue for California. You know California, that's the place with all of the illegal aliens are and where you can't own an assault rifle. There are 35.4 million people jammed into an area of 404,298 km². The landmass of the US is 9,162,369 km². 12% or more of the US population was stuffed into a state that accounted for roughly 4.41% of the landmass of the country, including Alaska and Hawaii. California is responsible for 14% of the United States' gross domestic product (GDP). The state's own GDP, which at \$1.4 trillion USD (as of 2003), is greater than that of every other individual US state, and every country in the world (by Purchasing Power Parity) save for the other combined 49 United States, China, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom. If California was considered as an independent self-sufficient economy, it would be ranked the 6th, ahead of France. By racial classification, whites are a minority in California. If you really need an assault rifle in California, talk to MS-13, they have plenty. Because of high levels of immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico, and higher birth rates among the Hispanic population, Hispanics are predicted to become a majority around 2040. Mexico doesn't have to invade, they only have to wait 30 years.

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It would appear that California could take at least 3 major hits at some time in the future. It has been suggested by geologists that if the 50-mile megathrust lets loose, it will generate a large tsunami and could cause Mt. Shasta to erupt. Water levels in USGS test wells show changes in response to relatively large local (>M~4) and regional earthquakes (>M~5) and to large distant earthquakes (>M6). Water levels typically drop rapidly for several days following an earthquake; water-level recovery takes weeks to months. For example, the hydrograph for well LKT shows responses to earthquakes on July 11, 1989 (M4.6 in Long Valley area), October 17, 1989 (M~7 Loma Prieta), October 24, 1990 (M5.7 north of Long Valley Caldera), and June 28, 1992 (M7.3 Landers).

In late 2010, the resurgence dome at Long Valley began to rise. It was rather significant, a 6 meter rise by the end of the year. In January of 2011, the dome rose another 3 meters. Long Valley was experiencing an ongoing earthquake swarm that suggested to the USGS that they had a magma intrusion. They notified the Governor and began looking at their emergency plan. Not that's it's important but Arnold's term had run out and he

hadn't been reelected; the new Governor was from the other party, Jerry Brown aka Governor Moonbeam.

Through February, March, April and May the dome continued to rise at an increasing rate, like the dome had at Mt. St. Helen's back in 1980. The USGS raised the warning level to Yellow. Alert-level notifications will be accompanied by brief explanatory text to clarify hazard implications as fully as possible. Updates may be issued to supplement any alert-level statement. Alert-level assignments depend upon observations and interpretations of changing phenomena. Some volcanic events may not be preceded by obvious changes, or the observed changes may not be well understood; thus, surprises are possible, and uncertainty about timing and nature of anticipated events is likely. Alert levels are not always followed sequentially. There are 3 alert levels:

Notice of Volcanic Unrest Alert Level ONE – This alert level is declared by USGS when significant anomalous conditions are recognized that could be indicative of an eventual hazardous volcanic event. The most likely such anomalous condition would be sustained, elevated seismicity. A “notice of volcanic unrest” expresses concern about the potential for hazardous volcanic activity but does not imply imminent hazard. Among the possible outcomes are: (1) anomalous condition is determined not symptomatic of an eventual hazardous volcanic event, leading to cancellation of “notice of volcanic unrest;” (2) symptomatic activity wanes, leading to cancellation of the “notice of volcanic unrest;” (3) conditions evolve so as to indicate progress toward hazardous volcanic activity, leading to issuance of a “volcano advisory” or “volcano alert.”

Volcano Advisory Alert Level TWO – This alert level is declared by USGS when monitoring and evaluation indicate that processes are underway that have significant likelihood of culminating in hazardous volcanic activity but when the evidence does not indicate that a life- or property-threatening event is imminent. This alert level is used to emphasize heightened concern about potential hazard. Among the possible outcomes are: (1) precursory activity wanes, leading either to cancellation of the “volcano advisory” or to a downgrade of alert level to “notice of volcanic unrest;” (2) conditions evolve so as to indicate that a life-threatening volcanic or hydrologic event is imminent or underway, leading to issuance of a “volcano alert.” “Volcano advisory” statements, supplemented as appropriate by “updated volcano advisory” statements will clarify as fully as possible USGS understanding of the hazard implications.

Volcano Alert Alert Level THREE – This alert level is declared by USGS when monitoring and evaluation indicate that precursory events have escalated to the point where a volcanic event with attendant volcanologic or hydrologic hazards threatening to life and property appears imminent or is underway. Depending upon further developments, a “volcano alert” will be maintained, updated, downgraded to a “volcano advisory,” or canceled. A “volcano alert” statement will indicate, in as much detail as possible, the time window, place, and expected impact of an anticipated hazardous event. “Updated volcano alert” statements will amplify hazard information as dictated by evolving conditions.

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Chapter 3 – Alert Level Two

May 16, 2011, Lancaster, CA...

“It there anything that we’ve overlooked?” Charlie asked, almost rhetorically.

“I can’t think of anything, honey,” Ruth replied.

“I was thinking about packing it all in and leaving California. Then they gave me that promotion and it was too good of an opportunity to turn down. But with a Level Two Alert at Long Valley, I’m having second thoughts.”

“Clarence was always looking at the sky waiting for a rock to pop out from behind the sun. Don’t worry so much Charlie, we’ll be ok.”

“That all depends on how big of an eruption they get at Long Valley and which way the wind is blowing.”

“Hurricane Cindy is bearing down on Florida. It’s awfully early in the season to be up to the third name already, isn’t it?”

“The first two were tropical depressions that didn’t materialize into tropical storms. They were talking about it on CNN.”

“The weather channel said that the winds were Category 3.”

“I think it’s too early in the season to have a major hurricane, that water isn’t warm enough to support a category 3 storm.”

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In the Antelope Valley, half the population seems to be Catholic. The largest Protestant Church in the Valley is Lancaster Baptist Church. Because of the growing population of the valley, Lancaster Baptist Church, the Mormons, the 7th Day Adventist and the Jehovah Witnesses all had very active recruiting campaigns. Every time a person turned around, there was another somebody ringing your doorbell wanting to save you. Gary had told Charlie how he got the Mormons to quit coming to his door. One day, he said, a couple of those missionary kids showed up wanting to save him. Gary told them that he was busy at the moment, but if they wanted to leave a Book of Mormon, he’d read it later. He caught the kid off guard and got a Book of Mormon. They never came back.

Charlie and Ruth belonged to the Lancaster Baptist Church. Saturdays were always shooting days and every Sunday morning found them in church. You go to church to pray for salvation, not to pray away God’s wonders. The day before their conversation, the pastor at Lancaster Baptist Church had a fiery sermon, admonishing his parishioners that the Day of Judgment could be at hand. Preachers are all the same; they try to

scare you into getting right with the Lord. On May 17th, Hurricane Cindy dropped from category 3 to a category 1 storm. Before the week ended, it was a tropical depression. By the end of May, the dome in Long Valley had risen 8 meters for the month.

Before Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980, the lava dome was rising 5 meters a day. However, the Mt. St. Helen's lava dome was quite a bit smaller than the Long Valley Resurgence Dome. The earthquake of January 9, 1857, in southern California apparently was about the same magnitude as the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. According to newspaper accounts, ground movement in both cases was roughly the same type. An account of the 1857 earthquake describes a sheep corral cut by the fault that was changed from a circle to an "S"-shape – movement clearly representative of right-lateral strike-slip. Studies of offset stream channels indicate that as much as 29 feet of movement occurred in 1857.

The San Francisco earthquake and fire of April 18, 1906, took about 700 lives and caused millions of dollars' worth of damage in California from Eureka southward to Salinas and beyond. The earthquake was felt as far away as Oregon and central Nevada. The 1906 earthquake, which has been estimated at a magnitude 8.3 on the Richter Scale, caused intensities as high as XI on the Modified Mercalli Scale. Surface offsets occurred along a 250-mile length of the fault from San Juan Bautista north past Point Arena and offshore to Cape Mendocino.

Along the Earth's plate boundaries, such as the San Andreas Fault, segments exist where no large earthquakes have occurred for long intervals of time. Scientists term these segments "seismic gaps" and, in general, have been successful in forecasting the time when some of the seismic gaps will produce large earthquakes. Geologic studies show that over the past 1,400 to 1,500 years large earthquakes have occurred at about 150-year intervals on the southern San Andreas Fault. As the last large earthquake on the southern San Andreas occurred in 1857, that section of the fault is considered a likely location for an earthquake within the next few decades. The San Francisco Bay area has a slightly lower potential for a great earthquake, as only about 100 years have passed since the great 1906 earthquake; however, moderate-sized, potentially damaging earthquakes could occur in this area at any time.

Tropical storm Dennis came along in June and petered out before it hit Florida. It was still classified as a hurricane, but it was only a category 1 storm. Later in June another hurricane, Emily, formed and it looked like it could rival Andrew. While it was still east of the Bahamas, the Midwest was hit with a swarm of tornadoes. During the month of June, the dome in Long Valley was raising 500cm a day.

FEMA was already in the Midwest because of the severe flooding along the Mississippi River. They dug out a different set of brochures and continued to render financial assistance. When Hurricane Emily passed the Bahamas it lost a little strength, but a hurricane warning was issued for Florida and the southern Atlantic coast. As the storm came nearer to the coast, it rose in intensity. 100 miles out, it was category 4. Then it jogged and headed straight for Georgia, continually gaining intensity. It jogged again and

looked like it would make landfall in Charleston, South Carolina at category 5. FEMA picked up their toys and headed north.

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The Midwest was a mess between the spring floods and the June tornadoes. When the category 5 hurricane Emily hit Charleston, FEMA's resources were stretched even thinner. God must have given them a break, because the dome in Long Valley stopped rising on June 29th. The USGS maintained the level two warning, however.

Precursor: Relating to earthquakes, refers to events immediately preceding actual shaking of ground. Includes changes in seismic velocities, groundwater levels, and tilt of ground surface.

Earthquakes can happen at any time of the day or night. At 6:00 the morning of February 9, 1971, an earthquake measuring M6.6 rocked the northern San Fernando Valley, near Sylmar. The earthquake ruptured a segment of the San Fernando fault zone, a set of north-dipping, high-angled reverse faults along the southeastern margin of the San Gabriel Mountains. It was at 7:42 a.m. on October 1, 1987, that a strong earthquake measuring M5.8 rocked the East Los Angeles region. The Whittier Narrows earthquake shook the region quite hard, registering shaking intensities of VIII on the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale (a relative shaking intensity scale from 1-12 shown in Roman Numerals). In the late afternoon of October 17, 1989, the northern San Andreas Fault ruptured in its first major earthquake since 1906. Centered along the remote Santa Cruz Mountains segment at 5:04 pm, the Loma Prieta M 7.1 earthquake claimed 62 lives, injured nearly 3,800 people, destroyed 963 homes, and damaged over 18,000 others. The combined dollar loss from this quake exceeded \$6 billion.

At 4:57 a.m. on June 28, 1992, a very strong earthquake occurred in the High Desert of Southern California. The M7.3 earthquake was centered on the eastern side of the San Bernardino Mountains near the town of Landers in Homestead Valley. The quake was the largest to strike California since the Kern County M7.7 earthquake in 1952. The quake was preceded a few months earlier by the Joshua Tree M6.3 earthquake on April 22 and followed by the Big Bear M6.4 earthquake at 8:05 a.m. later that day. A robust aftershock sequence followed and consisted of thousands of tremors, including 143 quakes registered M4.0 or stronger – 19 of which measured M5.0 or stronger. It was still dark the morning when the M 6.7 earthquake struck in San Fernando Valley at 4:31 a.m. on Jan. 17, 1994. The powerful initial jolt sent objects flying through the air and the intense shaking that followed caused furniture to dance around rooms, windows to shatter and concrete overpass abutments to burst. The most recent moderate aftershock was the Joshua Tree M5.0 earthquake on May 14, 1999.

At 8:24 am, Jan. 9, 1857, a very strong earthquake occurred on the San Andreas Fault in Central California. The Great Fort Tejon earthquake, one of California's largest historic quakes, is estimated to have measured about M 7.8-8.0 and registered shaking intensities of X-XII on the Modified Mercalli Scale (a relative intensity rating from 1-12

shown in Roman numerals). Violent shaking is estimated to have lasted 1-3 minutes! The earthquake caused over 230 miles of surface ruptures, from Parkfield to south of Wrightwood near Cajon Pass, with maximum horizontal fault displacements of 9.5 meters (about 32 feet). Some vertical displacements were measured.

On July 2, 2011, a 6.1 earthquake occurred on a portion of the southern San Andreas Fault south of Parkfield, CA in the northern stretch of the San Andreas Fault that had shifted in 1857. The USGS estimated the rupture at about 30km. No one realized that the M6.1 was a precursor. The first aftershock registered a scant M4.9 and the second M5.0. Considered as separate events, there was nothing altogether strange about tornadoes in the Midwest, a hurricane in South Carolina and a moderate earthquake in central California.

In the early morning hours (3:10am) of July 3, 2011, the remainder of the Fault broke. This segment went from where the earlier quake ended past San Bernardino. The rupture was about 400km long. This earthquake was M_w 8.4 and the registered shaking intensity was XI-XII on the modified Mercalli Scale. The duration of the shaking was 185 seconds. At 3:10am, there are very few people on the freeways in California. If you were going to have the Big One, it was better that most people were home in bed. Charlie and Ruth had those mirrored closet doors in their bedrooms. They began to rattle and Charlie woke up. He nudged Ruth who was just coming awake. The shaking was so intense that neither of them dared to get out of bed. Charlie finally did when Francine screamed. The shaking had thrown David out of bed onto the floor, but he wasn't hurt.

"Everybody get dressed," Charlie shouted when the shaking had subsided. Everyone hurried to put on jeans and sturdy shoes in case they had to deal with broken glass. Ruth got David and Francine and went to the basement shelter because it was the safest place in the house. Charlie and Ruth had an earthquake valve on their gas supply and it tripped. Charlie gathered a few things and went down to the basement to join his family. The kitchenette in the basement was one of those with a stove, oven, refrigerator, sink and microwave and it was hooked up to the propane. The previous day, Charlie had switched the Onan generator over to the propane tank. Charlie shut off the natural gas fueled hot water heater and opened the valve to start emptying it into the drain. The heater was well secured, but 50 gallons of water is pretty heavy. Hot water for the basement sink came from a small, electric, under-the-sink water heater. The generator had automatically kicked in when they lost electric power.

"Was that the Big One?" David asked.

"I don't know, David, but if it wasn't, we're in trouble," Charlie replied. "Ruth could you put a pot of coffee on? The first reaction of our former friends was to get the coffee going."

At 4:03am they were hit by the first aftershock, which measured M_w 7.1 and had an intensity of VIII on the modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. The duration was about 55 seconds.

“Sheesh,” Charlie said. “That was one hell of an aftershock. It would have been enough to be a whole earthquake on its own.”

The Structural Engineer had been right about Charlie overbuilding the basement. Even though everything upstairs was strapped in place, they heard glass breaking. Down in the basement, they just had to sit there and ride it out. The Bunn coffeemaker was screwed to the counter and Charlie, being a mechanic, had previously fashioned a loop out of #9 wire that kept the stainless steel coffee pot in place on the burner. Everything in their home was thought to be earthquake proof because they weren't that far from the San Andreas Fault. Sometimes it is better to just sit around and wait until the aftershocks subside. Been there, done that, got the T-shirt. Whittier Narrows might have not been a large quake, but it shook the hell out of the north end of the San Fernando Valley. I moved to Palmdale on November 7, 1987. I was out of the frying pan and into the fire.

July of 2011 was starting out with a bang. Spring floods in the Midwest followed by a swarm of tornadoes in June. Then there was the hurricane that hit Charleston and kicked the living crap out of the town. FEMA was totally overwhelmed. The USGS was trying to put out a forest fire with a teaspoon because Long Valley began to swarm shortly after the M8.4 quake on the San Andreas. A piece of advice for your northern Californians; if you live in Cascadia, get away from the shoreline. Somebody must have po'd Mother Nature. That's what they were saying on CNN and FOX News. If you lived in one of those Midwestern towns, you didn't care about Charleston or California. If you lived in Charleston, you were too busy trying to find a generator or dry ice to care about the Midwest or California. If you lived in California...

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Chapter 4 – Alert Level Three

...you were listening to the radio/TV and heard the USGS issue an Alert Level Three for the Long Valley Caldera. You didn't give a flip about hurricanes in South Carolina or tornadoes or floods in the Midwest. You were up to your elbows in Kimchee and it stunk to high heaven. California has lots of Orientals, but very few alligators, so your bottom is safe. Volcano Alert Alert Level THREE – This alert level is declared by USGS when monitoring and evaluation indicate that precursory events have escalated to the point where a volcanic event with attendant volcanologic or hydrologic hazards threatening to life and property appears imminent or is underway.

Eureka, California is just up state route 299 a little ways from Redding, 147.4 miles according to MapBlast. It is part of southern Cascadia. South of Eureka is Cape Mendocino. On April 25-26, 1992, three strong earthquakes struck the Cape Mendocino region of Northern California.

Tropical cyclones with maximum sustained surface winds of less than 39 mph are called "tropical depressions". Once the tropical cyclone reaches winds of at least 39 mph they are typically called a "tropical storm" and assigned a name. If winds reach 74 mph, then they are called a "hurricane" in the Atlantic or "Typhoon" in the Pacific.

The sequence began at 11:06 a.m. on April 25 with a powerful M7.1 mainshock centered beneath the mountains a couple miles northwest of Petrolia at a depth of 10 km. It had a thrust style fault motion similar to that of the Northridge earthquake in 1994. Severe shaking interrupted a Saturday morning parade at Ferndale, shattering plate-glass windows and tumbling bricks and masonry onto the sidewalk and street.

Strong aftershocks measuring M6.6 and M6.7 occurred at 12:41am and 4:18am the following morning about 14 miles off the coast. These quakes were centered in the Gorda plate and had left-lateral strike-slip fault motions. The three quakes shook homes from their foundations, threw chimneys to the ground, and broke underground utility lines. Numerous landslides occurred in the mountainous regions and extensive ground cracking and soil failures happened in the low-lying areas near the coast.

Then President Bush declared the communities of Ferndale, Fortune, Honeydew, Petrolia, Rio Del, and Scotia as disaster zones. Although several hundred people were injured and over \$60 million in damages were incurred, no fatalities were recorded.

Regional distance surface waves are used to study the source parameters for moderate-size aftershocks of the April 25, 1992, Petrolia earthquake sequence. The Cascadia subduction zone had been relatively seismically inactive until the onset of the mainshock ($M_s=7.1$). This underthrusting event establishes that the southern end of the North America-Gorda plate boundary is seismogenic. It was followed by two separate and distinct large aftershocks ($M_s = 6.6$ for both) occurring at 07:41 and 11:41 on April 26, as well as thousands of other small aftershocks. Many of the aftershocks following the second large aftershock had magnitudes in the range of 4.0 to 5.5. Using intermedi-

ate period surface-wave spectra, they estimate focal mechanisms and depths for one foreshock and six of the larger aftershocks ($M_d = 4.0$ to 5.5). These seven events can be separated into two groups based on temporal, spatial, and principal stress orientation characteristics. Within two days of the mainshock, four aftershocks ($M_d = 4$ to 5) occurred within 4 hours of each other that were located offshore and along the Mendocino fault. These four aftershocks comprise one group. They are shallow, thrust events with northeast-trending P axes. We interpret these aftershocks to represent internal compression within the North American accretionary prism as a result of Gorda plate subduction. The other three events compose the second group. The shallow, strike-slip mechanism determined for the March 8 foreshock ($M_d = 5.3$) may reflect the right-lateral strike-slip motion associated with the interaction between the northern terminus of the San Andreas fault system and the eastern terminus of the Mendocino fault. The May 10 aftershock ($M_d = 4.1$), located on the coast and north of the Mendocino triple junction, has a thrust fault focal mechanism. This event is shallow and probably occurred within the accretionary wedge on an imbricate thrust. A normal fault focal mechanism is obtained for the June 5 aftershock ($M_d = 4.8$), located offshore and just north of the Mendocino fault. This event exhibits a large component of normal motion, representing internal failure within a rebounding accretionary wedge. These two aftershocks and the foreshock have dissimilar locations in space and time, but they do share a north-northwest oriented P axis.

That's the background. On Tuesday, July 5, 2011 at 4:53pm, the megathrust gave way producing an $M_{8.3}$ earthquake with an intensity of X and duration of 93 seconds. It resulted in a tsunami estimated by some to be 35 meters in height while still in the Pacific Ocean off the Cascadian coast. The quake was followed by multiple aftershocks, some large enough to produce additional wave action. Long Valley remained under Alert Level THREE.

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The area in and around Lancaster, CA was hit by a $M_{4.3}$ aftershock at 4:52pm and Charlie and Ruth didn't notice the vibration from the Cascadian quake. A picture had fallen off the wall during the $M_{7.1}$ aftershock on July 3rd. Charlie never liked the picture anyway. The government cancelled work at Edwards because some of Lancaster had moderate to severe damage. Palmdale was hit the worst because the Fault ran right down the center of one of the streets in the town. Don't buy a house that has a seismic lot. They aren't trying to tell you the lot is earthquake proof. What they're trying to tell you is that when we get the Big One, your house will fall down. The name of the street is Springline Drive. Don't claim I didn't warn you. I might be off one street, but you get the idea, right?

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Charlie was outside with a tub of mortar and a trowel patching up the cracks in the stucco finish of their house at 4:52pm. He was just about out of mortar and the aftershock opened up another crack so he said to hell with it. Lancaster was without telephones,

running water, sewer, natural gas and electricity. Charlie had changed over the jets in the hot water heater, furnace, kitchen stove and the dryer and they were back to living upstairs. They were getting water from their well and he had hooked up to the septic system. Unless something else happened, they were good to go.

I'm not certain I know who said, *Never say never*, but the fella was right, 30m = ~98'. In case you don't realize it that was bigger than the tsunami that killed 240,000+ people back in 2004. The Pacific Coast of Washington is at risk from tsunamis. Coastal or submarine landslides or volcanism can cause these destructive waves, but large submarine earthquakes most commonly cause them.

Tsunamis are generated when these geologic events cause large, rapid movements in the sea floor that displace the water column above. That swift change creates a series of high-energy waves that radiate outward like pond ripples. Offshore tsunamis would strike the adjacent shorelines within minutes and also cross the ocean at speeds as great as 600 miles per hour to strike distant shores. In 1946, an earthquake in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska initiated a tsunami; in less than 5 hours, it reached Hawaii with waves as high as 55 feet and killed 173 people. (Hilo)

Tsunami waves can continue for hours. A few minutes or a few hours later, others can follow the first wave, and the later waves are commonly larger. The first wave to strike Crescent City, California, caused by the Alaska earthquake in Prince William Sound in 1964, was 9 feet above the tide level; the second, 29 minutes later, was 6 feet above tide, the third was about 11 feet above the tide level, and the fourth, most damaging wave was more than 16 feet above the tide level. The third and fourth waves killed 11 people. Estimates of the damage range from \$7.4 million to \$16 million (in 1964 dollars). That same tsunami destroyed property in many areas along the coast from Alaska to California. In Washington alone, that tsunami caused \$105,000,000 (in 1964 dollars) in damage. Depending on the coastline, the tsunami may rise to a height of 6 times, or more, the height of the ocean wave. $6 \times 98' = \text{OH SHIT } (588')$! Perhaps one should note that the wave height at the shore nearest the epicenter of the submerged earthquake is the highest.

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All of the news stations carried the tsunami warning. The elevation in the Antelope Valley averages 2,400' feet MSL. Charlie and Ruth were unconcerned about the effect of the tsunami on the Valley. 75% of the homes in the Antelope Valley are newer homes built after the Sylmar and Whittier Narrows earthquakes. Ruth and Charlie's home was built in the mid-'70's. It was up to the code after the Sylmar quake. After every major quake, California upgraded its building code to correct problems revealed by the last major quake. Homes built after the Northridge quake in 1994, were perceived to be almost, but not quite, earthquake proof.

In eastern central California, Long Valley began to vent steam. The geologists at the Long Valley Observatory issued an Information Statement. Unusual events such as

steam bursts (with or without minor ash fall), small avalanches, rock falls, minor mudflows, thunderstorms, and slash burning often attract media and public interest and inquiry. These events do not fit into any other information category. Most such volcano-related events are usually short-lived, and some may be hazardous. As this type of event almost always occurs without specifically recognized precursors, there is usually no opportunity to provide warning or arrange evacuation. Thus, persons in proximity to such an event are at some personal risk and will need to make their own safety decisions. *Information statements* may also be issued to provide commentary about notable events occurring within any staged alert level during volcanic unrest. In view of the extended seismic activity, which had taken place in California, the USGS extended the Level Three Alert.

The USGS's Volcano Hazards Program was headquartered in Menlo Park, CA. The earthquake along the San Andreas Fault had damaged, but hadn't closed, the Menlo Park office. Menlo Park is just up the road from Palo Alto. Dimes to donuts, the office was somewhere on or near the Stanford Campus. Lest there be any misunderstanding, a Level Three Alert said the Caldera was going to blow up very soon. The USGS anticipated a warning in the form of an earthquake swarm as the magma moved closer to the surface.

Wednesday, July 6, 2011...

The Long Valley Caldera began to swarm the morning of July 6th. There were several small quakes followed by a swarm of M6.0+ quakes followed by the Caldera exploding. Few people were in the immediate area, greatly reducing the loss of life and injuries. Wind circulates counterclockwise around a low-pressure area in the northern hemisphere. There was a low-pressure area moving slowly over eastern Nevada when the Long Valley Caldera blew. The ash cloud was carried south and then east across the southern US. As the low-pressure area moved east, the winds shifted carrying the ash cloud to the east. The winds aloft flow in a generally southeast direction and the higher layers of the ash were carried southeast from the Caldera.

◦

Yellowstone experienced a hydrothermal explosion at Porkchop Geyser in Norris Geyser Basin. These very large and violent hydrothermal explosions are independent of associated volcanism. None of the large hydrothermal events of the past 16,000 years has been followed by an eruption of magma. The deeper magma system appears to be unaffected even by spectacular steam explosions and crater excavations within the overlying hydrothermal system. The USGS Observatory located at Yellowstone assured the public that Yellowstone wasn't going to erupt.

◦

FEMA is looking for a few thousand good men and women. The positions may require travel to South Carolina, the Midwest or several locations in California. Per Diem rates

are paid. Please submit your applications at the nearest federal building. Vacancies at DHS headquarters and component agencies are listed on the Office of Personnel Management USAJOBS website. If you are interested in a position with any of our component agencies, you should submit an application using the instructions provided in the vacancy announcement. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can also access USAJOBS by calling (478) 757-3000 or TDD (478) 744-2299.

Opportunities include working with the public arranging assistance with regard to the spring floods, hurricane Emily, the June tornado swarms, the earthquake on the San Andreas Fault, the earthquake and tsunami in Cascadia and relief for residents living downwind from the Long Valley Caldera. Respirators will be provided.

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Early estimates put the volume of ash erupted by the Long Valley Caldera at 450 km³. Later estimates would revise the volume upward to 600 km³. Downwind deposits of ash produced by an explosive eruption could reach thicknesses of at least 20 cm at a distance of 35 km (8 in. at 22 mi), 5 cm at a distance of 85 km (2 in. at 53 mi), and about 1 cm at a distance of 300 km (0.5 in. at 185 mi).

These estimates of potential ash thicknesses are based on deposits of ash from past eruptions at other volcanoes that involved volumes of as much as 1 km³. Only a part of an ash-fall hazard zone would probably be affected by any single ash fall; the part affected would be determined by the wind speed and direction or directions during an eruption. You could multiply everything by 600, but that would give you too high of a result so multiply by 25 instead. That's approximately the square root of 600. Lancaster is 207 miles (334 km) (180 nautical miles) from Mammoth Lakes. The initial heading from Mammoth Lakes to Lancaster: south-southeast (167.1 degrees).

When Long Valley Caldera blew, much of the pyroclastic flow was reflected to the east, saving cities to the west of the Caldera. Charlie had over a foot of ash on his roof. The air was so full of ash you could barely see across the street.

"I'm going to have to clear that ash off the roof," Charlie told Ruth. "If I don't and it rains, the house could collapse."

"What a mess, the ash is getting into everything."

"Use the shop vac, not your regular vacuum cleaner, Ruth."

"I saw the pictures, Charlie. I already know," she replied. "Volcanic ash is made up of tiny jagged particles of rock and glass. Even a light dusting of volcanic ash can pose a health hazard to people and animals and damage crops, electronics, and machinery. Heavy ash fall, such as that from a large Caldera forming eruption, would devastate the surrounding area and affected areas downwind."

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Chapter 5 – Cleanup

Isn't it strange what people think about in an emergency? Their minds are going a mile a minute while they try to figure out how to cope with whatever the event was. At least it was July and they weren't likely to get a Pacific storm. Hurricanes and tornados leave people looking to see if they can recover important papers or, perhaps, keepsakes. The amount of damage caused by a tornado destroying a house or a hurricane like Andrew makes that task most difficult. If your house/apartment wasn't totally destroyed, the first thing you're going to need is standby electrical power for your refrigerator and freezer. Some of the squirrel writers are from Florida and at the Friday night squirrel writers meets we discussed the difficulty of finding a generator immediately before and after a hurricane came through. They weren't even available as far away as Tennessee. A 3kw unit is minimum and I would personally recommend a 5kw-6.5kw unit.

FEMA recommends having a 72-hour supply of food, water and other essentials. That presumes that they can have relief efforts underway by the 3rd day after the disaster and will be able to supply food and water. They were a little stretched in Florida in 2004. Imagine what it might be like if the country had a really bad year with late season flooding, tornadoes, an early season hurricane and then California went to hell in a hand basket. Most earthquakes, even 8.4 and 8.3 earthquakes don't kill a lot of people in the United States. In earthquake country, newer homes are constructed to resist the seismic activity. Loma Prieta taught a lot of lessons back in 1989 when the freeway collapsed in Oakland. Only a single section of the Bay Bridge collapsed and the Golden Gate came through fine.

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"I'll use a snow shovel on the roof and finish it off with our leaf blower. If I don't get it off the lawn, it will kill it."

"Wait until the ash stops falling or you'll just have to do it over. It isn't going to rain anytime soon."

"You'd better start watching the sky, Ruth. Maybe Clarence was right."

"We had our three, honey. I'd be more worried about the people on the Atlantic coast. They still have a couple of hurricanes to go."

Buildings in California are structurally engineered to resist earthquakes. That doesn't mean they won't collapse. Consider what happened in the Northridge quake of '94, for example. Northridge Mall wasn't so far from the epicenter and it sustained a lot of damage including a collapsed parking structure. A short distance away, a whole apartment building collapsed killing many people. However, compare that with what happened in Mexico City when they had their Big One. IMHO all of the homes in the US should be built to California earthquake building standards and every home in the country should have a basement shelter or a safe room. Safe rooms are engineered to resist a tornado

or a hurricane and in Florida, a basement is called a swimming pool. Think about it. In the winter in the northeast, ice storms take down power lines. Solar panels might not be worth much if you get a lot of snow. Besides, solar panels, inverters and batteries are fairly expensive. A 5kw generator and 25-gallons of gas might get you through until the utility company can restore power. You don't have to run it 24/7.

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In Lancaster the older homes and especially those with brick fireplace chimneys didn't fare so well. Most of the homes in Palmdale were built after the 1970's and they were earthquake resistant to some degree. The house that Clarence owned was the newest and therefore the most earthquake resistant. It was also only 1-mile away from the Fault. Both Ron and Gary's previous homes were 2½ miles from the Fault. Theirs survived, but Clarence's would need new stucco and new windows. Charlie hadn't heard that any of the tornadoes struck in Arkansas.

Highway 14 would be closed for a long time, because at least 3 of the overpasses were down, the ones on either side of Avenue S and the one on Palmdale Avenue. Sierra Highway south was closed because of several rockslides. Highway 138 was closed near Gorman on the west and where it abutted Highway 2 near Wrightwood. The wind turbine that Palmdale Water District had installed to provide 1Mw of power for its electrical needs had fallen down.

In Lancaster the overpass at Avenue L that went over the railroad tracks and Sierra Highway was closed pending further inspection and possible repairs. The Highway 14 overpass at Avenue I had cracked and was closed. Charlie could still get to work via Sierra Highway but Edwards was closed until the ash was cleaned up. When the ashfall had finally stopped a few days later, Charlie cleaned off the roof and used the leaf blower to clear the ash off the rest of the house.

He hauled the ash off the lawn a wheelbarrow at a time and dumped it in the street. When he finally got to the grass, he cleared away the remainder with the leaf blower. Ruth and Charlie's lot was large, about 8,000 feet². The good news was the bad news, Charlie had all the time he needed to clear off the lot and move the 8,000 feet³ of volcanic pumice. Expressed another way, he moved 296 yards³ of ash, by hand.

Ruth had to vacuum everything twice to remove the ash that had worked its way into the home. She used Charlie's shop vac for the first pass and her regular vacuum cleaner for the second. The generator had shut down due to a clogged air filter. Charlie replaced the air filter and changed the oil and oil filter while he was at it. He also had to replace some of the HEPA filters on his homemade LUWA system. Pumice is a volcanic glass that is full of cavities and very light in weight, especially in powder form. It is used for polishing, which means that it is gritty and very abrasive. By the time Charlie had the lawn clean, the shovel was polished to a mirror finish.

“Did the Christian Schools announce when they’re going to start back up?” Charlie asked Ruth.

“They announced that they had secured alternative power so it will depend on when the city can get the sewers repaired and the water restored. The city announced that the water should be restored for all of Lancaster within a month but that the sewer system could take up to a year for complete repairs,” Ruth replied.

“Any news about when they’re going to reopen Edwards?”

“The Air Force brought in the Army Corps of Engineers to clean up the ash. Adelphia said it would take them about a month to complete the cleanup.”

“I’ve gotten the outside cleaned up. How are you doing in here?”

“Francine helped with the laundry and we’ve vacuumed the house twice. There must still be some ash in the air because I can’t ever remember it getting dusty so fast. It got into everything in the house.”

“I’ll finish patching up the cracks in the stucco tomorrow. What’s for supper?”

“We’ll be eating out of the freezer for a while. The highways are closed and the grocery stores can’t get any food.”

“What about Costco, Sam’s Club and the Wal-Mart Superstore?”

“They have canned goods and staples but can’t get bread, dairy products, produce or meat,” Ruth explained. “I just bought what they had that we needed and we can take our meat out of the freezer.”

“Did they say when the aftershocks were going to stop?”

“No, but you remember that Northridge had aftershocks for over a year.”

“Want to go shooting tomorrow?”

“Sure, but let’s take Francine and David. It’s about time that they started getting familiar with firearms. They can use your .22 rifle and we can teach them the safety rules.”

Charlie had a Winchester 9422 lever action .22LR rifle. It was something he’d picked up at The Gun Store in Lancaster after The Three Amigos disappeared. He bought .22LR ammo from Wal-Mart by the brick and bought quite an assortment of ammo. It was all CCI and included bricks of Mini-mag solid and hollow point, Quik-shok hollow point, shotshells, subsonic hollow point, standard velocity ammo, Stinger and Velocitor. He’d also picked up a Ruger Mk II with a 6” barrel along the way.

Do you remember Gary's friend in San Jose who made Gatling guns? He'd made Gary a suppressor that slipped on the end of a Mark II barrel and locked in place using the front sight. The only problem with the suppressor was that it was incomplete and lacked baffles. Gary had given the suppressor to Charlie because it didn't work. Charlie got a machinist buddy at Edwards to make the baffles to fit the can. It worked very well, especially with the subsonic CCI ammo. What the heck was the difference? The Ruger Mk II was semi-automatic and therefore illegal anyway. As long as you remembered to occasionally change the O-ring in the part of the can that slid over the barrel, the handgun produced <100dB of sound using the CCI subsonic ammo. Charlie used the pistol to shoot varmints in his backyard, most of the time.

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It might seem pretty calm in Lancaster after two earthquakes, a tsunami and the Long Valley Caldera blowing up. Appearances were deceiving. People would already have been into the Antelope Valley from LA except the roads were closed. The Antelope Valley didn't need any outside help to have trouble. Both Lancaster and Palmdale had a very serious gang problem for one thing. Many business firms were closed until repairs could be made so they could reopen. Most of the people in the Valley worked somewhere other than the Valley; 85% of the working population of the Valley worked in Los Angeles.

The earthquake had transmitted vibrations to some of the hundreds of faults in the Los Angeles basin and some of them had let loose. Even if the people could get to LA, it was in worse shape than the Antelope Valley. The roads' being closed was like a coin and had 2 sides. Heads you couldn't get to work and tails, the people couldn't get out of LA to the Valley. Most of California was in one kind of a mess or another. Some of the Los Angeles TV stations were back on the air and there was trouble everywhere in LA. The Governor had had the CNG on alert since they made the USGS announcement and they had been activated when the first earthquake happened. Some of them had been in route to LA when the Cascadia earthquake happened. They turned around and headed to northern California and were just arriving there when Long Valley let loose.

Unlike the Caldera forming eruption 760,000 years ago, this eruption had all but wiped out Las Vegas. The pyroclastic flow didn't quite make it that far but 25 times 20cm of ash was 500cm of ash. There are about 30cm to the foot so Las Vegas had about 16½ feet of ash, give or take.

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The trouble really started when people ran out of money to buy food and gas. At first they put it on their credit cards, but not everyone can get a credit card. Some people actually depend on the government to pay their living expense. The welfare system has its ups and its downs. Usually if there's a problem, you can call the welfare office and they will eventually fix it. Verizon and Pacific Bell hadn't restored the phone service to Lancaster and Palmdale yet. Undeterred, people drove to the welfare office in Lancaster

only to find it closed. That's where the trouble in Lancaster first began during early August, at the welfare office. The LA County Sheriff emptied out both the Lancaster and Palmdale substations but could barely contain the riot. The CHP from the Lancaster office turned out too and they carried M16's in the back of their cars.

They got the riot under control without shooting anyone and decided not to make any arrests. On August 5th, rioting broke out at Costco on Avenue J when non-members were turned away because they didn't have the money to buy a membership, let alone food. Rather than have the store looted, Costco gave the Sheriff's Department several pallets of food to distribute to the needy. The store manager hoped that the people in Washington could find a way to write it off as a charitable deduction. Wal-Mart hired all of the available armed security guards in the Antelope Valley to protect their stores.

Wal-Mart had 6 stores in the Antelope Valley. There weren't enough armed guards to go around. However, there were a lot of people who worked as armed guards in LA that were looking for work. There's a solution for every problem. Almost. All of a sudden there was as much work as all of the out-of-work armed guards wanted. They didn't realize what they were getting into until Wal-Mart bought out both Big 5 Stores of all of their home defense shotguns. Big 5 Stores carry Remington 870 Express Synthetic 18", Winchester 1300 Defender 18", and Mossberg 500 Persuaders 18½" and 20". In the first part of this story, I listed some of the other gun stores in the Antelope Valley. Wal-Mart bought all of the 18" and 20" shotguns in the Valley, new and used.

The LA County Sheriff's Department didn't think too much of Wal-Mart arming their security guards but all of the guards had armed guard licenses and there was nothing they could do, the stores were within their rights. The only guards who got the shotguns were guards who had a 12-gauge shotgun listed on their firearm qualification permits. Having armed security guards was one thing. Having armed security guards with riot guns was quite another. It kept away a lot of customers who had money but did nothing to dissuade the people who had no money and were hungry.

News coverage of the Littleton shootings has revealed that an armed guard patrolling the high school exchanged fire with the two assailants. It is no surprise that a single guard, outgunned and surprised, was unable to stop the two heavily armed youths. But it is rather surprising that an affluent, suburban high school would employ an armed guard in the first place. How common is this?

According to the most recent data from the Department of Education, law enforcement officers patrol 19 percent of public high schools during normal school hours. An additional 8 percent are patrolled part of the time. Among middle schools, 10 percent are guarded during normal school hours, and eight percent are guarded part time. These figures are from 1996, and are probably too low. (Posted Tuesday, April 27, 1999)

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Chapter 6 – Growing Unrest

Putting in the armed guards had been the worst possible thing that Wal-Mart could do. Costco bought their way out of trouble and that ended it. Wal-Mart tried to prevent trouble and that started it. Ralph's, Von's, Stater Bros. and Albertsons sold off their inventory and quietly closed their doors. The more militant out of work employees from the grocery stores joined the crowds outside the Wal-Mart stores, sticking it to Wal-Mart every chance they got. In desperation, the managers closed the 6 Wal-Mart stores and posted armed guards at every entrance.

When you stopped and thought about the weapons Charlie and Ruth had, only his Persuader shotgun, Winchester 9422 and 8mm Mauser were legal. The M1A, Mk II and the H&K USP Tactical pistols were all semi-auto and therefore illegal. The XM8 and XM320 couldn't even be brought out of the gun case. The LSS attached to the XM8 and was useless by itself. Because of the growing unrest, Charlie kept the Persuader in a rack over the front door and the Mauser in the front hall closet. Even though they weren't working, Ruth's frugality proved to be a blessing. There was nothing illegal about a .357 Magnum revolver. Charlie thought the .44 Magnum cartridge a little too powerful for comfortable everyday use.

The Gun Shop had 2 Ruger GP-100 revolvers with 4", full shroud barrels. They also had HKS speed loaders for the weapons, thumb break holsters and loader cases. Ruth was satisfied with the feel of the weapon and they bought one each, with accessories. Dang California and their 15-day waiting period on handguns! Fifteen days might cool off a hot head, but often people who bought a gun to do something wrong had lots of patience. Five days would be long enough to cool of that hot head and you wouldn't grow grey hair waiting to take possession of your new gun.

August 18, 2011...

Charlie and Ruth took their new revolvers to The Gun Shop's basement firing range and got accustomed to the shooting pattern of the fixed sight weapons. They used full sized silhouettes at 50' and 7-yards. The Ruger firearms were very comfortable to shoot. They picked up a case of Federal 158-grain Hydra-Shok HP Duty ammo and a cleaning kit before they left.

While they were waiting for the guns, Charlie had sealed the windows of their home with duct tape, inside and out, trying to cut the amount of dust getting in. It helped, but they still had to open and close the doors and removal of a heavy coat of dust was becoming a daily chore. The aftershocks continued unabated and occasionally reached > M4 on the Richter scale. The Caldera had stopped erupting after 9 days and most of the ash ended up going east.

The tsunami might not have done any damage to the Antelope Valley, but the LA station showed additional footage every day. LA got the double whammy, with first the earthquake and then the tsunami. Washington, Oregon and British Columbia had shared in

the experience and the entire west coast had problems to varying degrees. The people in Eureka had the worst damage when the 98' wave became a wave of > 500' as it crashed ashore. They had experienced something like a half dozen surges before it all ended.

Electrical wires were down all over California; so many, in fact, that the Governor couldn't even estimate when the power would be restored. They had many of the roads cleared but it would take a couple of years to rebuild all of the downed overpasses. Up north in San Francisco, they'd experienced both quakes and the tsunami. Footage from an affiliate of Channel 4, KNBC, showed massive damage. Very few places in California had been spared any damage. No doubt they'd be talking about 2011 well into the next Century.

Grocery trucks finally started to bring in food from warehouses, but people still didn't have any money to buy food. It was the same everywhere in California and the Governor had little choice except to do what Governor Gray Davis had done when there was an electrical shortage years before. Tables were set up outside all of the grocery stores and people were issued state vouchers to buy necessities. The Governor's office had also issued a list of things that you could buy with the vouchers. The list didn't include what some people thought were necessities, cigarettes, for example. At pharmacies, you could also sign up for prescription vouchers, which the state based on Medi-Cal. Many drugs weren't on the Medi-Cal list, mainly because of the cost.

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"How do you expect me to go armed, Charlie? I can't walk around wearing a revolver," Ruth asked.

"Buy one of those shoulder bags that have a separate compartment for a gun," Charlie suggested. "If you tell me what color you want, I drive down to the Santa Fe Galleria in Palmdale and buy you one."

"I'll go with you, a purse is very personal."

It didn't make any difference; Santa Fe Galleria only carried one model, a basic black Galco shoulder bag.

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SEOUL, South Korea May 11, 2005 – North Korea said Wednesday it had taken steps that could allow it to harvest more plutonium for atomic bombs and that it would bolster its arsenal, the communist country's latest provocation amid deadlocked talks over its nuclear program. On Tuesday, China rejected using sanctions to prod North Korea to return to six-nation talks on its nuclear ambitions, with a spokesman saying Beijing's political and trade relations with its neighbor should be kept separate.

On Tuesday, the North's main newspaper alleged the United States was making a "fuss" by spreading reports of the alleged test preparations. However, the commentary in the state-run Rodong Sinmun daily didn't deny the North was planning a test.

North Korea issues daily warnings to its citizens of the alleged threat of invasion by the United States, and since June 2004 has refused to return to the disarmament talks, citing Washington's "hostile" policy. The United States has repeatedly said it has no intention to attack North Korea, but US officials have said the nuclear impasse won't be allowed to drag on forever.

That was a different story, wasn't it? North Korea doesn't have any nuclear weapons and China is our ally.

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On September 2, 2011 a riot broke out in Los Angeles when the Governor pulled the people distributing the vouchers. The legislature had implemented a new system where in you got universal vouchers for work. Hiring was to commence the following Tuesday. Estimates put the damage at 60 Billion dollars and the Assembly decided that people could help clean up the devastation in exchange for the state feeding them.

In the Antelope Valley, the water system was repaired but it wasn't turned on because sewer repairs were incomplete. The natural gas service was finally restored and Charlie switched everything upstairs back to natural gas. Did you know that the natural gas distribution system in the Antelope Valley was designed to withstand a magnitude 9 earthquake? It is achieved by using a series of flex joints of some kind. The feed pipe next to every home is connected to the system using a length of high-pressure hose. Once the pipeline was repaired gas became available. Edwards was reopening on September 6, the day after Labor Day.

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If you sit back and look at what happened in California, most of the problems were local in nature. In northern California, Eureka was washed into the ocean. If you lived in the area, it was the end of the world, as we know it. The eruption of the Long Valley Caldera and the major quake on the San Andreas didn't much affect you but the local quake and tsunami that followed were quite enough. In central California and to the south, they had the M8.4 quake on the San Andreas and the eruption to deal with, a real double whammy. Most of the energy when Long Valley blew up was focused on ejecting magma and ash and the associated earthquake was only about M7.5. People close to Long Valley didn't have homes to go back to because either the pyroclastic flow had destroyed them or they were buried in several feet of ash.

San Francisco was on the other side of the central valley and it had experienced both quakes, at a distance, and the tsunami. The quakes did very little damage. The wave had all but washed Alcatraz prison off the island. The Marina district that was so devas-

tated by the Loma Prieta quake in 1989 was completely gone. The only building that seemed to have avoided major damage was the Transamerica building. (The pyramid.)

Further down the coast, the oil platforms off the Santa Barbara coast were all gone, victims of the tsunami. The tsunami damage was greatly reduced south of Point Arguello and on to Oxnard. Damage on the southern coast began at Oxnard and continued on to Ensenada and points south. The 30-meter high wall of water that was almost 50 miles long hit northern California and radiated across the Pacific Ocean. It hit Hawaii, the islands in the south Pacific and Korea and Japan. Unlike the December 2004 tsunami, the deepening Pacific waters absorbed portions of the energy. That hadn't help Hawaii and further on, Midway Island was washed smooth. The highest point on the Midway Islands is 13m. Midway has no indigenous inhabitants; approximately 40 people make up the staff of US Fish and Wildlife Service and their services contractor living at the atoll (July 2005 est.)

The NOAA Tsunami Warning Program provides tsunami warnings for the West Coast of the US, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Insular States of Micronesia, and countries in the Pacific Basin. NOAA's Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii is the operational center for the International Tsunami Warning System of the Pacific, comprised of 26 Member States around the Pacific Rim. The Center issues tsunami warnings for Pacific Basin tele-tsunamis (tsunamis that can cause damage far away from their source). If a seismic event occurs off the coast of Japan, Japan issues a local tsunami warning. It is the Pacific Center's responsibility to warn all participating Nations in the Pacific Basin if the Japanese tsunami will cause damage far away from its source.

When discussing tsunamis the question is not if one will occur, but when. We know what causes them and we know a great deal about how to track them and forecast their path. While we may not be able to control when mother earth decides to flex her incredible power, we can control our ability to warn citizens and keep them out of harm's way and today we are answering that call.

Twenty-four tsunamis have caused damage in the United States and its territories during the last 204 years. Just since 1946, six tsunamis have killed more than 350 people and caused a half billion dollars of property damage in Hawaii, Alaska, and the West Coast. As a tsunami nears the coastline, it may rise to several feet or, in rare cases, tens of feet, and can cause great loss of life and property damage when it comes ashore. Tsunamis can travel upstream in coastal estuaries and rivers, with damaging waves extending farther inland than the immediate coast. A tsunami can occur during any season of the year and at any time, day or night.

A general rule-of-thumb is that if hard shaking takes place for 15-20 seconds in a coastal area, you should evacuate. The closer you are to the tsunami source, the less time you have to get away. In the open ocean tsunamis can travel over 500 miles/hour in water depth greater than 17,000 feet. In shallow water, say 60 feet, they travel about

30 miles/hour. You cannot outrun them with a boat. For example, a tsunami would travel from Sand Point, AK to Hawaii in about 4.5 hours and to California in about 6 hours.

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You thought maybe this was another adventure story? It might heat up in the next chapter when FEMA runs out of money. How many disasters is FEMA prepared to handle at one time? There is nothing glamorous about a hurricane, tornadoes, earthquakes, a tsunami or a Caldera blowing its top. It may be TEOTWAWKI for people in the immediate vicinity, and people downwind of the Caldera. The same could be said for the tsunami, it won't affect you if you're far enough inland and at 2,400'MSL. If your home is constructed in anticipation of disasters that can befall you, and you are well prepared, you'll be inconvenienced but you'll probably survive. Both property and lives can be insured. The money will replace the former, but not the latter. Don't worry about your property, it will be replaced. But, if they issue a tsunami warning, get to high ground. If they issue a volcano alert, take their word for it and go visit your Auntie Em in Kansas.

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Billy Wilkerson of The Hollywood Reporter found her sipping a Coke in the Top Hat Café and was so taken by her he blurted out that standard Hollywood line, "How'd you like to be in pictures?" He introduced her to Zeppo Marx. Her first role, sure enough, had her in a tight skirt and even tighter sweater sitting at a drugstore counter. She wasn't found at Schwab's drug store counter like some would have you believe, but the legend persists. MGM's "Sweater Girl" starred in many "women's pictures" fascinating men and women alike. Her glamour girl image belied her true acting talent, although many of her directors knew she was capable of greatness. Unfortunately, her private life – 7 marriages, alcoholism, and a scandal involving the murder of Johnny Stompanato by her daughter, Cheryl Crane – often interfered with her advancing screen career. I liked her in Peyton Place. (Lana Turner)

Charlie – The Rifleman Part II – Epilog

FEMA did in fact run out of money prompting Congress to generate a special relief fund to the tune of 1 billion dollars. A provision provided for additional funds, not to exceed \$30 billion and they were only added in \$1 billion units. When FEMA ran out the second time, Congress only approved an addition \$15 billion under the same \$1 billion allocation scheme. By the time the cleanup and rebuilding were completed, Congress had voted a grand total of \$67.5 billion.

Charlie and Ruth moved to Missouri on the money they got for his work on the cleanup and built a place in the Ozarks using the FEMA money they got to repair their home and from the sale of the repaired home. Charlie did the repairs and saved the money. They put the home on the market and got their asking price, housing was short in the Antelope Valley.

His thoughts were on Gary who lived only the next state down, Arkansas. But, for the life of him, he couldn't remember where Derek lived (Jonesboro) and didn't know where Gary had moved to (Mountain Home). Charlie and Rose's new home was on the north side of Bull Shoals Lake, SE of Theodosia on CR-620. They were 10-15 mile NE of Gary as the crow flies.

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